

**JAKE MARTIN**



**HALLOWEEN 5**  
THE REVENGE OF MICHAEL MYERS



JAKE MARTIN

# Halloween 5

*The Revenge of Michael Myers*



*First published by A Fan-Made Production 2023*

*This novel is entirely a work of fiction. The names, characters and incidents portrayed in it are the work of the author's imagination. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, events or localities is entirely coincidental.*

*This is a Fan-Produced work. No copyright infringement intended.*

*Second edition*

*Editing by Jay Hubner*

*Cover art by Zane Whitener*



*This one is for the fans, and to everyone that stuck with me.*  
*It's finally here.*  
*Happy Halloween.*



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# Foreword

For the past year, I've poured my heart and soul into writing, editing, and self-publishing the book in front of you. As a lifelong fan of the "Halloween" franchise, I couldn't help but notice that while the first four films had accompanying novelizations, the fifth installment and all subsequent entries until the 2018's Blumhouse-produced "Halloween" lacked literary adaptations, with the exception of three young adult "Halloween" novels by Kelly O'Rourke in the 1990s had been written for the franchise. So, to see if I could write a compelling story out of it and fill some of the void, I set out to write "Halloween 5". Out of all the films in the franchise, "Halloween 5" seemed to be in dire need of a fresh approach. Nearly thirty-five years have passed since its release, and its impact on fans remains disappointingly negative. I believed it was high time to delve into its narrative and explore the possibilities hidden within. Countless hours were dedicated to researching the film's production, re watching it, and scrutinizing the screenplay(s). My goal was to create a faithful and captivating adaptation that would satisfy both my own creative aspirations as a writer and the dedicated fan base.

Despite the intense process, I approached it with a deep love for the franchise, a profound respect for its fans, and a genuine admiration for the original screenwriters, Michael Jacobs, and Shem Bitterman. My intention was to capture the essence of



the original story while infusing it with my own unique voice. This endeavor was a true labor of love, and I sincerely hope that passion shines through on every page. It is important to clarify that the publication of this book was never intended as a commercial venture. When it was released in May of 2023, its purpose was simply to fill the void on the shelves between 1988's "Halloween 4" and 2018's "Halloween." Its presence on bookshelves was meant to be a physical representation of bridging that gap. Stick with me, I'll elaborate on that point shortly.

As I delved into the project, I encountered numerous challenges while attempting to address continuity errors and fill the gaps left by the rushed production of "Halloween 5". Armed with two scripts and the film itself as references, I undertook the task of rewriting various sections of the story. I took the liberty of introducing new scenes, including one particularly intense and gnarly sequence that I hope will captivate all of you. These additions served the dual purpose of instilling fear and providing explanations for elements that were left unexplored or undefined in the film and its screenplays. My goal was to establish a more seamless connection between the narrative of "Halloween 5" and the events that unfold in the subsequent film, "Halloween: The Curse of Michael Myers."

It is worth noting that writing this adaptation in 2023 offers a unique advantage. I have an explanation of the "Thorn" storyline that the screenwriters in 1989 did not, considering that "Halloween: The Curse of Michael Myers" writer Daniel Farrands brought Thorn to the forefront. If memory serves me well, the "Man in Black" and the Thorn tattoo were introduced just to add mystery to Halloween 5, and it would be bucked to the succeeding filmmakers to work out.

In my original forward that was published with the initial paperback copy on Amazon, I had written that self-publishing the novelization was a “careful process to avoid any legal entanglements.” The truth (and you heard it here first, folks) is that I saw the copyright disclaimer on Amazon’s KDP service. I most definitely said (in an electronic but very much legally binding agreement) that I had the copyright and/or permission to publish something I very much did not have the copyright and/or permission to publish. But here’s the thing, it did weigh on me quite a bit, but at the end of the day - I never thought anyone would notice or care...

Well, they very much *did* fucking notice.

Not Trancas International Films (the actual owners of the property).

Not the director of the film.

Not the screenwriters.

Not anyone whatsoever associated with the property.

*Twitter* noticed.

I won’t name any names here, as that has already been done, and the water is (for the most part, I would hope) under the bridge. But yes, Twitter noticed my unauthorized novelization, and I discovered Twitter’s insidious nature to turn people into animals.

No one read my book. This wasn’t about the prose whatsoever.

They didn’t like that I lied to Amazon and broke copyright law. I sold a few dozen books, nothing major. And no real

money was earned from the sale of those books. It was \$20 or so by the time all was said and done, and I can't cash that \$20 out because I didn't hit Amazon's threshold of \$100.00. As stated, this was never a commercial venture. And even if I did hit the threshold, even if I made a *grand* on this book, I don't think it'd set off too many alarm bells over at Trancas International Films (I'm sure they have bigger fish to fry than some fan in a flyover state writing an unauthorized novelization to the least successful film in their catalog). If anything (and even this I doubt as this wasn't a highly publicized work until Twitter got mad at me), I would have increased the notoriety of Trancas' original property and made them more money on rentals or purchases.

Enter Zane Whitener.

I approached Zane as a fan of his. His YouTube series, "In Praise of Shadows" offers incredible insight, perspective, and opinion into a variety of topics. He felt awful about the backlash I had received as a result of lying to Mr. Bezos' computer. So, he agreed to interview me on what had happened on the Twittersphere regarding "Halloween 5". A few days after that initial interview, he published a forty-two-minute video on his YouTube channel going over the timeline of events. Its title? "The Most Controversial Novelization of all Time". He added some commentary and opinion of his own (which, to be fair - I think he was angrier than I was at the situation (Zane would admit to that in a heartbeat)).

The video had impact. It kicked off everything that happened next.

Within a mere two hours of publishing the video, it became

evident that a substantial number of individuals were rallying in support of my decision, defending my right (or lack thereof) to publish “Halloween 5” in the manner I had chosen. It also became apparent, much to my surprise, that the demand for my book extended far beyond my initial expectations. It turned out that there were far more people interested in reading my work than the forty or fifty I was expecting.

I took note of something that I think needs to be discussed here and now.

Bullying.

I found myself being targeted and bullied by an individual who was evidently struggling with his own mental health issues. It is worth noting that he has since expressed regret for the remarks he made about me and my publication, as evidenced by his apologies on Twitter. Working closely with children grappling with mental illness on a daily basis has provided me with an understanding of the complexities involved, but it does not excuse or justify such behavior. I believe he now comprehends this as well.

However, it is crucial to address the fact that responding to bullies with further acts of bullying is never acceptable. Some of my supporters responded to this man with a level of ferocity akin to a lynch mob, and this went far beyond what is justified. In some instances, individuals even stooped so low as to wish him harm or even death. The extent of the attacks was so severe that he felt compelled to make his social media accounts private and make serious decisions regarding his mental well-being.

While I believe that both Zane and I made the right choice



in publishing the video, I must admit that, for the second time throughout this ordeal, I have witnessed the dark side of the internet. It can be an unforgiving and merciless place.

-

Let's get back to the book, shall we?

Upon discovering that there was an audience out there (and the fact that I got wind that a real publisher was watching and waiting to read it), I went back to the drawing board.

Someone on social media said they had read the original paperback. While stating that, they posted a meme of Dr. Loomis taking a swig from the old priest's whiskey flask in "Halloween 4", essentially saying you had to be drunk to read, let alone enjoy my book.

I didn't want that. At all.

What lies within these pages differs from what went out in May. I wanted to make damn sure that if more people were reading it and talking about it, it had to be one hell of a lot better than it was in May. I returned to page one on June 2, the day Zane's video came out, and began my rewrites. In its expanded form, as it is presented to you now, the work is far more detail orientated and (hopefully) considerably more engaging. And I'm damn proud of the rewrites and edits. I just felt bad for my father, who, serving as my editor, had to re-read the entire book from top to bottom, only this time, it wasn't 50,000 words, but

closer to 75,000.

For nearly an entire month, I dedicated countless hours each day to writing, all while juggling the responsibilities of my full-time assistant teaching job. Day in and day out, I immersed myself in the process, almost vomiting words onto the page. Simultaneously, my dad provided support by editing my work in real-time on the shared document I used. It felt like running a marathon (not that I've ever run a marathon, but people I know who have done silly things like running a marathon tell me it is really, really, really, really, painstakingly hard), pushing forward until I was damn sure that the project was complete. Setting a deadline for myself proved to be immensely helpful in maintaining focus and ensuring progress. And for almost giving my father a heart attack.

I promised July 1 as a release date: Well, friends and neighbors, here we are.

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I'm not bitter about anything that happened regarding this book. I was never truly mad about what had happened. I was just a bit miffed that other than myself and a few people close to me won't have this novel on their shelves with the other novelizations. But really, I was just disappointed that I thought, for just a moment, that no one would read my work.

I'm so happy that isn't the case anymore. You all have *no* idea.

In fact, I'm fucking ELATED that you all are about to read what I have spent a year working on. Even if you think it's garbage

(but I hope you at least dig what I did), I can say it's done and that I don't have to spend another moment with it.

Throughout my time writing this novelization, I have developed a deeper appreciation for the characters than I ever had throughout the years of watching the film. From the enigmatic and monolithic presence of Michael Myers to the resilient Jamie Lloyd, the genuine and loyal Rachel Carruthers, and the legendary Dr. Samuel Loomis, each character has captured my imagination in ways that the film never could. I have even found myself attached to the more minor characters, such as Samantha Thomas, Spitz, Mikey, Max the Doberman, and yes, even Tina Williams (whom I genuinely hope you will view in a more favorable light after reading this book. Wendy Kaplan, I love you!). However, as much as I have come to love and appreciate these individuals, I must admit that I am now more than ready to bid them farewell.

But *you*, dear reader, are just about to meet them for the first time. So to speak.

Enjoy, and Happy early Halloween.

Feel free to say hi:

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# Acknowledgement

A huge thank you needs to be extended to my partner, Jimmy, who has been my most significant emotional supporter throughout the absolutely insane journey of writing. Your patience and understanding during my moments of madness regarding the book have been genuinely incredible. I know it hasn't been easy for either of us, but your presence has been my anchor. I am deeply grateful for your love. You have my deepest apologies for all those nights spent in my writing room. I owe you a LOT of couch time.

-

I want to express my deepest gratitude to my father, Jay, whose editorial skills are truly remarkable. His keen eye for detail and meticulousness in examining my book have been invaluable. He pushed me to write better and to keep writing. Not to mention the fact he worked his ass off on this final draft. I'm pretty sure he felt more pressure about the release date than even I did. 74,000 words is a lot to wade through in a month, and it does *not* go unappreciated!

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A special and heartfelt acknowledgment goes out to Zane Whitener, whose intervention and assistance proved to be nothing short of salvation from the depths of despair. Your willingness to lend a friendly helping hand and create that impactful video when I needed it most is something I will



forever remember. And of course, thank you for the most incredible artwork I could have asked for. Zane, I am in your debt, and I'll buy you a beer if I ever meet you in person.

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Thank you to Brian Joseph, who mocked up some killer artwork for the book. You can find his images in the back of the book!

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To all you die-hard "Halloween" fans out there, I hope my novelization met your expectations. I know us fans can be a tricky bunch to impress\*. I'm not doing this for the dough (clearly) but to pay tribute to the series that made me fear the dark and Bill Shatner.

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And thank you to Malek Akkad and Trancas International films for not suing me when I originally published the book on Amazon. And, of course, for never letting evil die.

\*See past responses to: "Halloween III: Season of the Witch" (1982) ("III" has a much greater response these days, and it's getting harder to find people who don't like it, but when it came out? Wow did people hate it.), "Halloween 5: The Revenge of Michael Myers" (1989), "Halloween: Resurrection" (2002), Rob Zombie's "Halloween" (2007), Rob Zombie's "Halloween II" (2009), and "Halloween Ends" (2022).



## Prologue : October 31st, 1988

**B**reathing was difficult now. The blast had torn a hole through the Shape's chest. Not that the Shape paid it much mind. Pain was but a nuisance to him. It didn't matter if the blast had even stopped his breathing. The Shape would keep moving forward. The Shape did not wince, he did not scream, he did not cower, and he would not stop until Halloween was over or the girl was dead. On the evening of October Thirty-First, Nineteen-Eighty-Eight, Michael Myers awoke from his ten-year-long slumber and committed a bloody massacre unlike any on record. The sleepy little town of Haddonfield, Illinois, was shocked to its core by the Shape's visceral carnage. By the night's end, seventeen of Haddonfield's innocent residents were brutally murdered, all so the Shape could finish his mission and eliminate his final victim - Jamie Lloyd, his niece.

Once again, the men, clad in their heavy jackets and their presence heralded by blazing car lights and the glint of firearms, obstructed his path, denying him his quarry. The Shape, relentless and unforgiving, had been thwarted this night while she slipped away, evading his grasp. The urgency to recuperate coursed through his being, the need to mend his wounds and restore his strength. Halloween had concluded, but it was only a temporary cessation. In the depths of his black heart, he knew that the coming year would bear witness

*to his resurgence, and on that fateful day, he would claim her. He would rend her flesh, plunging his blade deep into her fragile form, severing the delicate threads of her life. The reasoning behind this compulsion eluded him, obscured by the murk of his fragmented psyche, yet his purpose remained focused. They had instructed him, those mysterious voices that whispered in his mind, promising an end to his relentless fury once their bidding was complete. Rest would be granted, they assured him, once the last vestiges of their existence were extinguished.*

*Michael's grasp on the identity of those commanding voices remained tenuous, shrouded in a haze of uncertainty. All he knew, with unwavering certainty, was that their directives were absolute. They had mended him and reconstructed his body, so he became their instrument of vengeance. Decades past, they had seized him, whispering sinister commands into his ear, commanding him to snuff out his elder sister, Judith. Then, confined within the walls of that wretched sanatorium, he bided his time with unyielding patience, fifteen long years slipping by like phantoms. When the order was given to slaughter his younger sister, Laurie, he obeyed without question. In his failure, they punished him, but simultaneously they mended him once more. Another decade crawled by, a relentless procession until the day they finally stirred him from his prolonged slumber. Their words rang out, crystalline in their significance—she was all that mattered now, the girl who had captured their undivided attention.*

*All that mattered was the **girl**.*

\* \* \*

*Against the cold and lonely Haddonfield riverbed, Red Deekins, now*

*a weathered seventy-year-old recluse, found himself in a life he had never envisioned. Once, he had been blessed with a loving wife, Jeanie, two sweet kids, Ralph and Cindy, and a great career within a bustling Chicago manufacturing plant. The job gave him everything he needed—a desirable salary, a pension, and the best healthcare money could buy. Nestled within suburbia, Red bought his family a recently built two-story home with an expansive backyard. Red did well enough to buy his wife a brand-new car a year into his career. Life was good for Red. Real good. But the hands of fate are capricious, aren't they? And their grip tightened upon Red with ruthless brutality. On an ordinary day, while toiling away within the confines of the plant, those hands of fate squeezed tight around Red's neck. A nasty car crash claimed the lives of his beloved wife and his cherished children and, in its ruthless wake, stripped Red of his sanity. The meager reserves of vacation and sick leave he had accumulated proved useless in the face of overwhelming grief. Faced with desperation, he made the painful decision to sell the home he bought his family, utilizing the proceeds to settle the crushing weight of the mortgage. The remnants of this shattered dream amounted to a mere ten thousand dollars. It was a sum that would barely sustain him.*

*In the haze of sorrow, Red resolved to seek solace in a place where the cost of living was less exorbitant than the streets of Chicago. Haddonfield, a picturesque little town a couple of hours away, called to him. His weary eyes fell upon a modest trailer park situated on the outskirts of town, the only haven that aligned with his dwindling budget. The prospects appeared promising, but alas, his newfound affliction, his companion in despair, clung to him like a nasty rash. Two months into his residence in Haddonfield, Red found himself trapped by the grip of alcohol, succumbing to a bottle of Jack Daniels every other day. The consuming nature of his habit led to his inability*

*to hold a job worth a shit. A decade passed, the burdens of his hardships bearing down upon him oppressively. Red aged beyond his years, his weary soul shackled to menial jobs that could barely sustain his bad habit, let alone his home. Occasionally, he would take on odd jobs. Still, the shit pay derived from such endeavors was swallowed by his nightly ritual—drowning his sorrows in an alcohol-induced slumber, his drunken mind clinging to the faint hope of a miraculous reunion with his lost family, praying that all of this was nothing more than a fucking nightmare.*

*In a hopeful attempt at filling the void that his dead family left him with something other than Jack Daniels, Red saved the little bit of cash he wasn't drinking away and bought a parrot he saw in the window of the local pet shop in downtown Haddonfield. Considering his frankly rank smell and disheveled appearance, Red was surprised that they let him take the parrot. But he couldn't have been happier when they did. He named him "Tookie," and they immediately took to each other. While the bird was no genuine replacement for his family (nothing, and no one would), he loved Tookie all the same. Companionship with a bird was better than none, and no one wanted to hang around an old, smelly, piss-poor drunk. A year after Tookie came into Red's life, he didn't have the finances to afford the property tax on his mobile home, and the city government took it from him, leaving both Red and Tookie officially homeless. They wandered with a few of Red's belongings in a trunk until they went to the riverside outside Haddonfield. Red loved the sound of the running river and thought it was as good of a place as any. They found themselves a small and leaky but sturdy shack. They supposed the shack was used by trappers decades ago as it looked like it had been completely abandoned for some time. It had a tin roof with a few holes that Red figured he could patch. He and Tookie would make the most of their disparate situation. It was old, musty, and somewhat damp, but Red*

*didn't mind. He and Tookie could make a little fireplace, and Red could drink Jack Daniels to keep him warm.*

\* \* \*

*On the cold and crisp Halloween night of October 31st, 1988, Red trudged wearily back to his dilapidated shack by the river, having worked his old ass off at Ted Hollister's farm baling hay. The bitter chill gnawed at his bones as he fumbled with the rusty lock to gain entry into his drafty home. His stomach growled hungrily. "SQUAAAWWWKKKK!" Tookie sang Red's arrival.*

*With a heavy sigh, Red tended to his faithful companion. He turned his attention to his dinner only after ensuring the bird's nourishment. Red pulled a can of soup and his saucepan from the table, lit a makeshift stove made from spare wood and tinder, and began to simmer a pot of Campbell's New England Clam Chowder. However, the stillness of the shack was abruptly shattered by a loud rustling sound emanating from beyond its worn-out walls. Yet, it wasn't Red who detected the intrusion—it was Tookie, who possessed an uncanny knack for detecting disturbances in their secluded world. The avian sentinel erupted in a series of squawks, "QUUAAKK SQUAAAWWWKK, AT THE DOOR, AT THE DOOR!" Tookie's cries pierced through the quiet within the cramped space.*

*Although Red had grown accustomed to disregarding Tookie's raucous alerts as mere theatrics, a tinge of curiosity tingled in the back of his mind. No visitors had graced their doorstep since their arrival, and it seemed as though the world beyond their isolated home never so much as realized they were even there. Red often wondered if anyone even knew they resided within the tattered shack.*

*Throughout the years spent in this seclusion, not so much as a single person had ventured near, leaving Red with an almost comfortable sense of invisibility.*

*“Quiet, Tookie! Quiet!” Red pleaded, suppressing his flicker of hope that perhaps, just this once, there might be a visitor. Yet, experience had taught him that, more often than not, the wind toyed with the shack, rattling its fragile structure and triggering Tookie’s ear-piercing outbursts. The cycle would repeat itself nightly—the bird’s alarmed cries, Red’s scolding (which had always tugged at his heartstrings to do so), and a swig from the bottle to lull himself back to sleep, seeking the numbness it provided.*

*Another rustle disrupted the silence, this time catching Red’s attention. He was sure he heard a sound like heavy breathing seeping in from behind the weathered front door. Doubt flickered in his mind, again attributing it to the whims of the wind. But he was curious. With cautious steps, Red made his way towards the rickety entrance, its worn-out wood riddled with gaping holes that he had long intended to repair but had never found the motivation to do so. As Red gingerly opened the door, squeaks erupted from its rusty hinges, protesting the intrusion. He peered into the pouring rain, his gaze scanning the murky surroundings. His suspicions were correct; there was nothing to see—just an impenetrable cloak of darkness shrouding the night. Content that his initial assumption was correct, Red retraced his steps, preparing to shut the door behind him. However, his diligence was limited to the front entrance, and he neglected to consider the vulnerability of the unguarded back door.*

*In an instant, Red was yanked backward, his neck trapped in the vice-like grip of a pair of large, grime-streaked hands. The intruder’s immense strength left Red gasping for air, his windpipe constricted, muscles straining against the mounting pressure. In the clutches of impending demise, Red’s mind reeled with thoughts of his mortality.*



*A single concern pierced through his head—Tookie. Realizing that his loyal companion would be left defenseless, he accepted the wish to live. Red tried to kick at and squirm and fight his way out of the grip. It seemed useless.*

*In an inexplicable turn of events, the intruder loosened his grip, his grasp gradually slackening until he collapsed to the grimy, debris-laden floor. Caught off guard by the sudden events, Red barely had time to process any discernible features of his assailant, save for the overwhelming impression of a hulking figure possessing incredible strength. Red's nervousness grew as he peered at the menacing figure violently invading his space. His gaze fixated on the man's sturdy black workman's boots, worn and scuffed from countless hours of labor. Moving upward, he observed the tattered dark blue coveralls, their fabric marred by a series of singed holes, revealing glimpses of the assailant's raw, burnt flesh underneath. The sight of these charred openings, like battle wounds in the garment, Clearly the man had a recent violent confrontation. Hell, it looked like several recent violent confrontations. However, the peculiar choice of disguise caught Red's attention the most. This would be deemed bizarre and outlandish in any other circumstance, but tonight was Halloween. The intruder wore an off-white, almost silvery latex mask meticulously crafted to resemble a face. The artificial visage was devoid of features, its surface pale and ghostly, evoking an unsettling sense of emptiness. It was a face frozen in a perpetual state of emotionlessness. It scared the shit out of Red.*

*Suppressing his trepidation, Red momentarily averted his gaze from the mask, directing his attention towards the ravaged coveralls. There, he noticed traces of what appeared to be blood staining the man's clothes. The crimson smears added a gruesome element to the freakish ensemble, heightening Red's unease. As his eyes explored further, he discerned a black tattoo etched onto the assailant's left*

wrist, its symbolism foreign and enigmatic, leaving him unable to decipher its meaning. The mask, however, remained the primary source of Red's apprehension. The blankness of its expressionless facade instilled a profound and unexplainable dread that crawled beneath his skin. Red struggled to comprehend why the featureless countenance troubled him so deeply, but he couldn't deny its overwhelming impact. It was as if he beheld the embodiment of a ghastly specter, a phantom of inexplicable origins.

Driven by curiosity and fear, Red mustered his courage and carefully removed the mask from the intruder's head. He worked swiftly yet cautiously, mindful of not arousing the man from what Red assumed was his drugged stupor. His fingertips brushed against the cool latex surface as he peeled it away, revealing the man's true face beneath. The man's face bore the marks of unimaginable torment. Deep, grotesque burn scars crisscrossed his features, transforming his face into a nightmarish landscape. The severity of the burns made it almost impossible to discern any recognizable traits, leaving Red with the unsettling realization that identifying this man would prove exceedingly difficult, if not impossible. The left eye socket was permanently sealed shut by what looked like one hell of a poke in the eye.

Despite the recent traumatic encounter and the lingering fear coursing through his veins, Red's inherent good nature and compassion refused to budge. Mrs. Milly Deekins didn't raise a bully. Throughout his life, he was guided by empathy and goodwill, faithfully adhering to the teachings of "love thy neighbor." Even during his darkest moments, he had never posed a threat to anyone. He was simply a hazard to himself. Red's eyes softened as he gazed upon the disheveled figure sprawled before him. Somewhere within his battered heart, he perceived a glimmer of humanity in the assailant, an understanding that perhaps this man was merely

*a victim of unfortunate circumstances. Red figured that the poor schmuck probably got loaded and wanted to scare the shit out of some old fart. In addition, the way the man looked said a lot about the tough times he'd been through. His body showed clear signs of a hard life, with many scars and bruises that told tales of countless struggles fought inside and out. Red had been there before. Maybe not this bruised on the outside, but Christ, had he been there. Summoning his remaining strength, Red prepared a space for the wounded intruder. He groaned as he cleared a section of the cluttered floor. Grunting with exertion, he struggled to move the unconscious heavy man to the newly cleaned area, their combined weight making the task arduous and challenging. After successfully settling the stranger onto the makeshift bed, Red retrieved a pillow from his worn-out mattress and a blanket from his threadbare couch; he carefully arranged them to make it as comfortable as possible.*

*Red kept a watchful eye over the slumbering figure as the hours, days, weeks, and months slipped away.*

*Little did Red know that the man he had extended a chance at redemption, a reprieve from the haunting darkness that had consumed his existence, was no ordinary assailant but a force of malevolence—one of pure, unadulterated evil.*

*In the silence of that night, the Shape rested, its psychopathy temporarily quieted, but the slumber was transient, a mere intermission in the grand stage of terror that awaited Haddonfield and its unsuspecting inhabitants.*

*The Shape rested for a year without waking.*

# Chapter 1

One year had passed since the return of Michael Myers to Haddonfield and the devastation and chaos left in his wake. In the aftermath, Jamie Lloyd, Myers' nine-year-old niece, lay in her bed at the Haddonfield Children's Clinic, lost in a deep slumber. Unbeknownst to those around her, Jamie was caught in the grip of a recurring nightmare. These nightmares were no strangers to Jamie, haunting her consciousness with relentless persistence. Yet, it was not the horrifying images in her head of her uncle's malevolence that troubled her the most, but rather the subsequent nightmares that followed. These were nightmares where Jamie was forced to relive the brief yet terrifyingly psychotic moment she had been driven mad by some unseen force and stabbed Darlene, her foster mother. The residual guilt and trauma continued to torment her, refusing to release their grip on her fragile psyche.

Despite the official police report that detailed the events of that fateful night in 1988, the Haddonfield Police Department never recovered Michael Myers' lifeless body. Haddonfield Sheriff Ben Meeker had merely assumed that it was obliterated when they tossed a few sticks of dynamite down the mine shaft they shot the son of a bitch into. While the department

proclaimed his demise, Jamie harbored an unsettling conviction deep within her being - her uncle was still out there, lurking in the shadows, patiently awaiting his opportunity to complete the gruesome task he had initiated. Michael Myers was not yet finished; he hungered for Jamie's life, his insatiable thirst for blood, and demanded her death at his blade.

Within the confines of her dream, Jamie found herself traversing the familiar hallway of her foster parents' home, her footsteps reverberated through the silent corridor as she retraced her past Halloween night. In her trembling hands, she cradled the haunting artifact of her evening's festivities—a clown face mask she had worn while partaking in the age-old tradition of trick 'r' treating.

With deliberate focus, Jamie advanced down the hallway, its dimly lit ambiance casting shadows upon the walls, her heart steady. Turning left, she entered her foster parents' bedroom, the door creaking ominously in protest. There, in the familiarity of the room, Darlene's personal belongings stood as silent witnesses to the events about to unfold. In the corner of the room, barely noticeable among the mundane objects, lay a pair of fabric shears—sharp and gleaming under the hallway light that seeped through the slightly ajar door. Mesmerized by their ominous allure, Jamie's hand grabbed them. Their cold, metallic touch felt somehow at home in her hand. The weight of the shears felt comforting. It was as if they held the key to her deepest wishes. That these shears will fix and give everything.

Driven by an invisible force, Jamie turned her back to the room and retraced her steps across the hall, her footsteps louder now, betraying the otherwise silent, mounting tension within her. She stood at the bathroom threshold, where Darlene was preparing a soothing bath for Jamie. The scent of lavender

permeated the air, mingling with the suffocating atmosphere of impending doom.

Darlene, sensing Jamie's presence, turned with surprise etched across her face. The puzzlement quickly transformed into sheer terror as her gaze fell upon Jamie's raised arm, wielding the shears with horrid determination. Time seemed to halt as if caught in the clutches of an unholy spell. Jamie's eyes, usually warm and full of innocence, now glimmered with a sinister gleam. A sense of otherworldly possession seemed to have taken hold of her, transforming her into an agent of madness. "Jamie?" Darlene was visibly confused.

With a primal fury consuming her, Jamie's arm lunged forward, forcefully plunging the sharp blades of the shears into Darlene's shoulder. The sickening sound of flesh being punctured resonated through the room, intertwining with Darlene's cries of agony. In a nightmarish trance, Jamie continued her assault, raising the shears repeatedly, mercilessly stabbing her foster mother's defenseless body, red blood spilling and contrasting with the white walls.

Jamie's frenzied attacks painted a gruesome tableau of violence and madness. Each vicious thrust of the shears tore through flesh and bone, their gleaming edges leaving a trail of crimson in their wake. Darlene's blood gushed in a torrent, splattering onto Jamie's once-colorful clown costume, now tainted with the macabre hues of her foster mother's gore. Darlene's screams of pain mingled with desperate pleas for mercy, her trembling hands futilely attempting to shield the vulnerable parts of her body. Yet, each feeble defense only invited fresh wounds as the relentless blades sliced through the soft flesh of her palms. The force behind Jamie's frenzied attacks proved overwhelming, breaking bones in Darlene's

hand, and intensifying her suffering to unimaginable levels.

Overwhelmed by the excruciating pain and the shock of her foster daughter's unhinged violence, Darlene's consciousness slipped. As her body weakened, she lost the battle against her collapsing strength, slumping into the now-bloodied bathwater. The once-clear liquid transformed into a sickeningly rusty violet. It was a grotesque transformation of this tranquil setting into a scene of horror. With the ferocity of a predator sated, Jamie slowly retreated from the blood-soaked bathroom, leaving her foster mother to a grim fate of drowning or bleeding out alone in the crimson-stained water. Unaffected by the gravity of her actions, Jamie retraced her steps, her purposeful stride heightening her absolute absence of remorse.

Descending the stairs, Jamie's descent into darkness reached its climax as she encountered her uncle Michael's psychiatrist at the foot of the staircase. The psychiatrist, his gaze wild with disbelief and terror, was transfixed by the cold, murderous intent radiating from Jamie's eyes. It was a gaze that conveyed an undeniable truth—that the evil lurking within the human psyche was not confined to the realm of nightmares but had manifested itself in the heart of an innocent child.

"NO!" Dr. Sam Loomis' voice boomed through the air, a guttural cry of disbelief and horror. The sight before him was beyond comprehension—Dual killers, where one was already too much to bear. The terrible realization settled in his mind, an unwelcome truth that solidified in the horrid reality of the moment: she *must* die. Trembling with trepidation and grim sadness, Sam's hand instinctively reached for his gun, his shaking finger hovering over the trigger.

Sheriff Ben Meeker, who had faithfully stood by Jamie's side throughout the harrowing ordeal, reacted swiftly, forcefully

pushing Sam's arm and holding the gun down. His voice carried the weight of reason in a night with none as he pleaded with the disturbed psychiatrist. "No, Sam, she's just a child!" The weight of the situation burdened them all, compelling Sam to crumple to the floor, consumed by despair. The utter hopelessness of the circumstance, mingled with the sorrow of seeing his failure embodied in an innocent young girl, was too much for him. The countless, fruitless endeavors to comprehend Michael Myers now appeared to converge in this heart-wrenching instant. Evil was unknowable and unstoppable. There was nothing he could do.

Tears streamed down Sam's face, overwhelming loss and anguish consuming him. Meanwhile, Jamie remained poised, the glint of the shears still held high in her hand, a potent symbol of her descent into madness. Sheriff Meeker, fully aware of the dire circumstances, approached Jamie with very cautious steps. He clung to a glimmer of hope, hoping his words could pierce through the madness engulfing Jamie's mind.

"It's okay, Jamie," Ben spoke with a measured calmness, his voice laced with empathy.

"Just drop the scissors, and let's talk about it, okay? Everything will be alright." Deep within, he knew that the situation was far from manageable and that there was no way in hell everything would be alright. Still, he clung to the belief that his words might anchor Jamie's spiraling sanity, if only for a fleeting moment.

Slowly, deliberately, he ascended the stairs, his hand resting uneasily on his service weapon. Ben's movements were marked by an underlying tremor - the decision that loomed over him. As he closed the gap between himself and Jamie, his mind grappled with the chilling possibility that he might have to



use his gun against the very child he had vowed to protect. Uncertain of his resolve, he questioned whether he could take such drastic, irreversible action.

With a delicate touch, Sheriff Ben Meeker reached up and firmly grasped Jamie's trembling forearm, gently guiding her arm down. The shears slipped from her grasp and clattered onto the floor. A palpable sigh of relief escaped Ben's lips, resonating with the magnitude of the situation he had just defused. Jamie, drained of all strength, crumpled down the stairs, her body trembling with fear and emotional turmoil. The pent-up horror and trauma coursing through her young veins now erupted in a torrent of screams that pierced the air. It was a primal release, the anguished cry of a shattered innocence resonating through the darkened house.

Heavy with compassion, Ben descended the stairs, his arms outstretched to offer solace and protection. The cold night air embraced them as they stepped outside, away from the suffocating darkness that had engulfed the house. Gently, he settled Jamie into the backseat of his police cruiser, wrapping her in a fragile shield of safety within the chaos that had unfolded within the house's walls.

The following day brought a sobering reality to bear. Now in the intensive care unit, Darlene lay sedated and fighting for her life. The deep and jagged wounds inflicted upon her body would slowly heal, but the scars etched upon her psyche would linger, demanding a much lengthier recovery process.

As for Jamie, her journey took her to the Haddonfield Children's Clinic, where her troubled mind could be evaluated and healed. Here, Doctor Sam Loomis, burdened by the failure of his previous patient, Michael Myers, found himself assuming a new role—a dedicated caretaker for Jamie, the young girl

who bore the weight of a tormented lineage. He committed to providing her with the intense psychiatric care she needed, a beacon of hope within the darkness that threatened to consume her.

Jamie's shattered innocence became entwined with the tattered remnants of her uncle's fractured psyche in this convergence of fate. Fueled by a sense of redemption and responsibility, Doctor Loomis embarked on a path to heal the wounds of both past and present, vowing to break the cycle of darkness that had plagued their lives.

A year passed, marked by the somber halls and sterile walls of the psychiatric facility that housed Jamie. Within that time, a consensus emerged among the doctors overseeing her care—Jamie had become mute. The absence of her voice spoke volumes, a haunting resonance within the hearts of those who tended to her. All except for one: Doctor Sam Loomis.

In the depths of his intuition, Sam recognized a connection, a peculiar link between Jamie's muteness and the shadowy legacy of her uncle, Michael. It was as if, in some mysterious twist of fate, she had inherited a fragment of Michael's curse, however briefly. The thought sent shivers down his spine as he contemplated the unfathomable forces entwined their lives.

Within the silence, Jamie displayed a stark departure from the ominous behaviors that once plagued Michael within the confines of Smith's Grove. She radiated signs of life—frequent smiles, heartfelt tears, and the joyful abandon of childhood play. Unlike her uncle, who had been almost entirely overtaken by his catatonic state, Jamie exhibited a vibrancy that defied the darkness threatening to trap her. Sam, guided by a flicker of hope that burned within his heart, found solace in these glimpses of humanity that Jamie demonstrated. Though the

specter of her uncle loomed over them, he steadfastly believed that Jamie would not succumb to the same fate. In his eyes, she was more than a vessel for the horrors that had plagued their lives; she was a beacon of resilience and an indomitable spirit that resided within her. Perhaps something *did* take over Jamie's innocent mind for a brief moment in time. But only for that brief moment.

Despite Jamie's glimmers of hope, her path toward healing was far from easy. It would be disingenuous to paint her journey as one of unbridled joy or seamless progress. On the contrary, it was a rough, challenging road riddled with harrowing obstacles that tested her fragile and mending spirit.

The nightmares, those haunting remnants of the previous Halloween, served as an unwelcome harbinger of Jamie's internal struggles. They struck with a vengeance, triggering violent seizures and plunging her into full-blown panic attacks that left her gasping for breath. The weight of her actions, the memories, and the realities of that fateful night bore down on her conscience, compounding her psychological distress. Throughout her waking hours, Jamie found solace in daydreams of better times, a brief rest from the harsh realities that tethered her to the present. Yet, these vivid fantasies of long-lost happiness often morphed into fevered dreams, casting her young mind into a distorted realm where reality and imagination intertwined in unsettling ways. The line between the conscious and the subconscious blurred, subjecting Jamie to an inner hell that no child should ever be forced to endure.

In an attempt to alleviate Jamie's anguish and stabilize her fragile mental state, the diligent yet oblivious medical staff at the Children's Hospital resorted to heavy medication. A complex cocktail of antidepressants, anti-anxiety drugs, and

anti psychotics became integral to her daily routine. The antidepressants aimed to alleviate the lingering guilt that gnawed at her soul, a relentless reminder of the horrors she had unwittingly unleashed. The anti-anxiety medication sought to mitigate the frequent panic attacks and night terrors that plagued her vulnerable psyche. Finally, the anti psychotics stood as a barrier, erected to shield Jamie from the precipice of another descent into madness.

Yet, within the haze of medication, Jamie struggled with feelings of hopelessness and the persistent sense of being trapped within her own mind. Those feelings on her young shoulders served as constant companions on her journey.

No, it wasn't all roses for Jamie Lloyd.

Within the confines of the hospital, Jamie found some solace in the weekly presence of her foster sister, Rachel. To Jamie, Rachel was a pillar of strength, her protector through the chaos and horrors of the previous Halloween massacre. It was Rachel who had bravely confronted Michael Myers, her car striking the fucker not once but twice to ensure Jamie's safety. Whenever Rachel graced the hospital with her visits, Jamie's world felt momentarily whole again, the darkness temporarily pushed aside by the light of their bond.

Sadly, a noticeable absence weighed heavily upon Jamie's heart—her foster mother, Darlene, rarely made an appearance. Jamie understood all too well the reason behind Darlene's absence. The memory of what Jamie had done to her foster mother, the image of raised shears, and the pain that followed, loomed like an insurmountable barrier. Jamie knew that the wounds she had inflicted upon Darlene, both physical and emotional, would forever mar their relationship. The scars ran deep, leaving a chasm that seemed impossible to bridge. In

her quiet moments of reflection, Jamie wondered if Darlene would ever find it within herself to forgive and reconcile with the shattered remnants of their bond.

However, Rachel's love gave Jamie hope in the darkness. Rumors circulated that Rachel was considering adopting her once she was ready to leave the hospital, offering a future filled with the warmth of a loving home and sister. This possibility kindled a flame of anticipation within Jamie's heart, a flicker of light that whispered of a brighter tomorrow. Though Jamie remained oblivious to the full extent of her actions, the revelation of her deeds shattered her fragile psyche. The shock of learning what she had done to her foster mother became a catalyst, plunging her into a prolonged period of silence. Words failed to convey the depth of her remorse and confusion, leaving her voice trapped within the confines of her frantic mind.

To compound matters, the nightmares tormented Jamie mercilessly, their relentless grip refusing to release her from their clutches. Night after night, she relived the horrific moments of Halloween Nineteen Eighty-Eight, the touch of her uncle's arm seared into her memory, intermingled with the piercing image of herself brandishing the shears against Darlene. As the calendar approached Halloween again, the nightmares grew in intensity and vividness, their torment escalating with each passing day.

And now, as the clock struck midnight, a new vision began to plague Jamie's dreams. It was no longer the act of stabbing her mother that dominated her nocturnal horrors. The tides had shifted, bringing forth a haunting premonition, a foreboding glimpse into the horrors awaiting her this Halloween night.

On October 31st, 1989, a new vision came...

*Jamie's world had become a desolate landscape where the biting winds of isolation and detachment swept relentlessly through her broken soul. She felt like a discarded fragment of existence, unnoticed and insignificant within the vastness of the universe. This sense of insignificance gnawed at her spirit, reinforcing her belief that she was a mere afterthought, lost in the shadows of her existence. In the numbing chill of this isolation, a darker force stirred within Jamie's depths. It was an undercurrent of anger, brutality, and disdain that twisted and coiled around her fragile mind. Unbeknownst to her, sinister energy simmered beneath the surface, fueling her darkest impulses. It was an intoxicating power that coursed through her veins, a force that made her feel like a lethal virus capable of infecting and obliterating all in her path. The notion of such potency both exhilarated and horrified her, for it felt like she had become a vessel for the evil essence of her uncle Michael, a presence that had taken root within her dreams.*

*But this was no dream. This revelation plunged Jamie into the depths of terror like a descent into absolute madness. The lines between nightmare and reality blurred, merging into a twisted tapestry where the world itself seemed tainted with the color of freshly spilled blood. Every mundane detail carried weight in this deranged alternate reality, as though the very fabric of existence had been warped into a grotesque mixture of violence and despair.*

*Jamie found herself trapped within this nightmarish existence, devoid of control over the body she now inhabited. She was nothing more than a helpless spectator, forced to see the world through the eyes of Michael Myers. The realization of whose eyes she was peering through sent terror spiraling within her mind as she grappled with*

*the unsettling truth that her consciousness was merely a passenger within the vessel of the psychopath. A consciousness she was terrified of losing.*

*As Jamie's gaze followed Michael's scrutiny of his surroundings, she experienced every sensation, every movement, as if she were trapped within the unholy depths of his very being. Michael's body felt rigid and immobile, as if time had frozen his muscles in place for an eternity. Yet, to Michael's obliviousness, he rose from the makeshift bed with stoic grace, stretching his back with an unsettling creak akin to an aged wooden floorboard. Through Michael's eyes, Jamie surveyed the desolate scene before them. It was a dilapidated shack, weathered by neglect and in dire need of repair. The walls sagged under the passage of time, and the air inside was heavy with the scent of mildew and decay.*

*Michael's hand instinctively reached up to his face, only to find it bare, devoid of the mask that had become his shield, his symbol of terror. Jamie sensed his rising anger, a turbulent storm brewing within, or perhaps it was her own fury taking hold. It was getting harder to differentiate whose feelings Jamie was experiencing. Her? Or HIM?*

*His gaze shifted to the right, drawn to the sight of the mask hanging on a weathered post against the shack's wall. The silvery-white surface of the mask glimmered in the flickering candlelight, a haunting presence in the suffocating atmosphere of the shack. Time had not been kind to the mask. Decay had taken hold, transforming the once pristine visage into rot and decomposition, and it resembled a desiccated corpse. Once smooth and unmarred, the mask's neck was now stained with a sickly, piss-yellow hue, and tattered edges revealed the ravages of time.*

*Driven by an insatiable impulse, Michael's hand moved with purpose, snatching the repugnant mask from its resting place on*

*the wall. The texture of the decaying latex sent a shiver down Jamie's spine as she felt a sickening mixture of dread and anticipation emanating from within Michael's psyche. The mask, a grotesque relic of his past, clung to his hand like a macabre trophy.*

\* \* \*

Jamie's eyes flickered open. Her gaze attempted to get a fix on a point in her hospital room that held no significance. Though her body remained confined to the sterile hospital bed, and one of her eyes could see her room through the haze of the vision, her mind had wandered far beyond those clinical walls. In her mind's eye, she found herself transported to a decrepit and forgotten shack nestled in the shadows of Haddonfield. The scent of must and decay wafted through the air, assaulting her senses and further cementing the illusion.

Jamie's gaze shifted to her right hand, mirroring the actions she witnessed through her psychic connection. She caressed her face with delicate fingers, sensing the absence of something familiar yet intangible. Her arms reached out as if straining to grasp an elusive presence. In that surreal moment, a profound realization washed over Jamie. Not only was she mentally and intrinsically linked to the Shape, but a deep psychic bond had woven their very beings together.

The significance of this revelation weighed heavily on Jamie. Her thoughts and emotions became entangled with the essence of the Shape, merging like twisted vines in a macabre dance. The boundaries of time and space seemed to blur as the



psychic connection transcended the physical limitations of their separate existences. Jamie felt she could peer into the depths of the Shape's tortured soul, experiencing his homicidal desires, darkness, and insatiable hunger for destruction.

Jamie lay in her hospital bed, her body seemingly motionless, while her mind wandered through the murky depths of her connection with the Shape. Before her, the shack stood with its oppressive ambiance and deteriorating walls, representing the darkness now entwined within her. The boundary between her thoughts and those of the Shape had blurred, leaving her in a perpetual state of uncertain existence.

A sense of purpose ignited as Jamie embraced the unsettling truth of her psychic connection to the Shape. It was a daunting task, but she knew that unraveling the enigma of this bond was crucial. There was something significant here, a hidden truth waiting to be unveiled. Jamie focused her mind on the image of the shack, feeling the link between her and the Shape intensify. The musty scent of the dilapidated hut permeated her senses as if she could taste the lingering decay that clung to the air. Her fingertips grazed the rough, weathered surface of the wooden walls, and a shiver ran down her spine. This was no mere hallucination or figment of her imagination. Jamie was there, present in the shack, with the Shape by her side.

In this connection's depths, Jamie realized it was not a one-way conduit. The flow of information and emotions moved in both directions. It was as if she had opened a forbidden door, granting her access to a hidden, hellish realm. The revelations that flooded her mind were terrifying, unveiling a dark and unfathomable aspect of herself that had lain dormant until now. It was a part of her that shook the foundations of her identity and filled her with indescribable dread.

Nevertheless, Jamie's thirst for understanding outweighed her fear. Perhaps against her better judgment, she pressed further into the depths of this psychic bond in her pursuit of knowledge. If this connection was real and held the key to stopping the Shape's murderous rampage, then she had to explore it fully. With every step she took, the Shape's emotions coursed through her like a torrential storm. Anger, frustration, and an insatiable hunger for revenge surged within her. It was an overwhelming amalgamation of darkness, threatening to engulf her fragile sense of self.

Jamie's thoughts coalesced around a singular purpose in the overwhelming tide of emotions. WHERE WAS HE?!?

She had a chance, perhaps her only chance, to find the Shape before the cycle of violence began anew. Her heart raced as she contemplated the possibility of averting further bloodshed. The weight of her responsibility settled upon her shoulders, intertwining with the sinister presence within her mind.

As Jamie delved deeper into the psychic abyss, the sinister allure of the Shape's presence threatened to consume her entirely. But she clung to a flicker of hope, a belief that she could make a difference by unraveling the mysteries of their connection. The abyss beckoned, and Jamie mustered the strength to step further into its depths, her resolve strong, even as the ominous void threatened to swallow her whole.

And then, she saw her own image projected in his head. It was as if she were his only thought.

Jamie began to panic.

*Michael's eyes fixated on the cherished mask, a relic symbolizing his essence, power, and eternal existence. It was more than just a piece of molded latex; it was his connection to a more profound, darker force within him. A profound transformation occurred when he first donned the mask, melding his identity with the mask's sinister visage. He couldn't comprehend the intricate bond that had formed, but he knew it amplified his predatory instincts, enhancing the lethal precision of his blade and the unforgiving force of his fist. The mask became an extension of himself, an embodiment of his indomitable will.*

*Holding the mask in his hands, the gravity of his past trials and the relentless pursuit to extinguish his existence resonated within him. The mask had been his shield against the world's torment, an impervious barrier that defied mortality itself. It was an admonition of his invincibility, despite the pain, suffering, and countless attempts to bring about his demise. Systematically, Michael raised the mask to his face, feeling its extraordinary presence settle seamlessly into place. With the mask in position, he felt complete, whole, and ready to embark on another unholy crusade.*

*Jamie, caught in the current of Michael's perspective, struggled to grasp the depths of his connection to the mask. It was an ever-shifting vision, an enigmatic dance that eluded her understanding. Attempting to unravel Michael's contemplation about the mask became an exercise in futility, leaving her head throbbing with confusion and pain. The glimpses she caught revealed a relentless focus on the mask's significance and a belief in its ability to grant him invulnerability in the face of all opposition.*

*Michael's gaze shifted beyond the mask, scanning the surroundings*

*of the dilapidated shack. His eyes settled on an elderly man in the makeshift kitchen, nonchalantly spreading butter onto a slice of bread marred by the faint traces of mold. Recognition flickered within Michael's darkened mind. He remembered the old man, a previous target that had once eluded his grasp. But this time, Michael's conviction surged. There would be no escape. The man's fate was sealed; his life would be extinguished with ruthless efficiency.*

*A primal instinct stirred within Michael, commanding him to hunt once more. The insatiable desire to pursue his prey, to satisfy the blood lust that pulsed through his veins, consumed him. It was Halloween again, a night drenched in significance for him. It was a symphony of terror, a twisted theater where he reveled in the macabre. SHE awaited his arrival, the object of his relentless pursuit, and his dormant sadistic tendencies stirred, eager to be unleashed.*

*Unbeknownst to Jamie, Michael's purpose pressed upon her psyche, triggering a chaotic response within her body. Panic surged through her, her limbs twitching involuntarily as the uncontrollable forces within her began to take hold. The boundaries between their minds blurred, an unsettling fusion that drove her into a vortex of confusion and fear.*

*The haunting realization settled upon her with suffocating weight—the game had begun, and Michael Myers, the Shape, was once again on the prowl.*

\* \* \*

Jamie's entire body trembled with incredible pain. It was as if her whole body was on fire. Her fingers contorted

with an intensity that mirrored the torment she experienced. The searing flames of agony coursed through her nerves, a relentless onslaught that Michael remained impervious to. Each movement felt like an excruciating battle against an invisible force, a battle that threatened to engulf her in a sea of suffering. She gritted her teeth, her jaw clenching with the effort to resist the overwhelming vision that held her captive. Summoning every ounce of limited strength within her, Jamie pushed her hands down onto the bed, her muscles straining against the invisible restraints that bound her. Her knuckles turned white as she fought to regain control, to anchor herself back to the tangible world she longed to return to. It was a struggle against an insidious force that threatened to eat her from the inside out. Frustration mingled with helplessness, creating a maelstrom of emotions that was on the brink of breaking her fragile resolve.

Jamie knew that Michael's thoughts were fixated on her. That knowledge fueled her drive, injecting a flicker of defiance into her besieged spirit. Summoning every ounce of willpower, she wrested control of her arms, blind to the consequences that awaited her. Her trembling hands sought solace in her chalkboard's familiarity and the unassuming chalk stick nearby. It had become her voice, her means of communication in a world where words had recently begun to fail her.

Jamie began to etch words onto the chalk with shaky fingers gripping the chalkboard's surface. The screeching sound reverberated in the silence of her room.

She formed the words slowly and deliberately.

“HE’S COMING FOR ME.”

The words stared back at her. The gravity of the truth they carried settled upon her like a suffocating cloak. She swallowed hard, trying to steady her racing heart as cold sweat trailed down her back, betraying the terror that clenched her soul. The clarity of the vision was undeniable, leaving no room for doubt or escape. Michael Myers, her uncle, the embodiment of pure evil, was inexorably drawn to her, and the specter of his arrival loomed ever closer, casting a horrid shadow over her fragile existence. He was coming for her.

\* \* \*

*Michael moved with absolute silence, his footsteps barely registering against the worn floorboards of the old shack. His eyes fixated on the old man, who seemed blissfully unaware of the impending horror behind him. A heavy dining room chair sat in the corner as if awaiting its role in this macabre dance. Michael's hand reached out, gripping the chair's weathered frame, its weight reassuring in his grasp.*

*Michael closed the distance between them as the old man hummed a tune to his parrot, indulging in his meager snack of green bread. Shadows enveloped his form, concealing his intentions until the very last moment. Time seemed to hold its breath, and then, in one swift motion, the Shape raised the chair high above his head, muscles tensing with raw power. The chair descended with a thunderous force, the crack of its impact shattering the air and the old man's skull simultaneously. His body crumpled, collapsing to the floor in a grotesque heap, his limbs convulsing uncontrollably. A torrent*

*of crimson erupted from the fractured remains of his head, pooling around him like a sinister halo.*

*Michael's colossal hands, veined and sinewy, reached out. He seized the old man by his scrawny, leathery neck, his fingers sinking into the fragile flesh, exerting a vice-like pressure. Michael clasped the man's forehead with his other hand, fingers digging into the weathered lines etched upon the aged skin. Unstoppable force met frailty.*

*Jamie, trapped within this nightmarish perspective, felt a surge of disgust rising within her. The sound of bones crunching, like an egg mercilessly cracked open, flooded her ears. The sickening sights and sounds of the murder forced bile to rise in her throat. Blood and fragments of shattered skull sprayed forth, staining the walls and floor of the decrepit shack, a gruesome testament to the horror that unfolded before her child's eyes.*

*The lifeless body that belonged to the old hermit was cast aside callously and tossed across the room with disturbing ease. The sickening thud as it collided with the unforgiving surface broke bones with a sickening snap. However, the old man remained oblivious to the pain that no longer held any dominion over him. Death had claimed him, leaving behind only a vessel, a hollow shell discarded in the wake of Michael's unquenchable appetite for destruction.*

\* \* \*

Alice Patsey, a stern and formidable registered nurse with a quarter-century of service, was in an eerily quiet night

shift. Perched at the deserted nurse's station, she sternly and meticulously attended to her tasks, leaving no room for error. Patient charts were scrutinized, and medical records were examined with an excellent eye for detail. The relentless glare of the fluorescent lights intensified her austere presence, while the aroma of freshly brewed coffee provided a momentary escape from the strict demands of her profession.

Suddenly, the serenity shattered like fragile glass as Jamie's heart monitor erupted into blaring alarms, piercing through the hushed atmosphere like a jarring fire alarm in the dead of night. Nurse Patsey's instincts honed through years of experience immediately recognized the urgency that accompanied such a shrill alert. Time froze for a brief instant, her mind swiftly analyzing the implications of the alarm, and then, with a surge of adrenaline, she sprang into action. Her coffee cup clattered against the desk, its dark liquid staining the meticulously organized paperwork. Nurse Patsey leaped from her chair, her heart pounding in sync with the frantic beats emanating from Jamie's room. The intensity fueled her movements as she sprinted down the brightly illuminated corridor, her nurse's shoes pounding against the clean linoleum, leaving a fleeting echo in their wake. Each step propelled her closer to Jamie's room, her mind racing with a whirlwind of possibilities. Concern etched across her features, she mentally rehearsed various scenarios, preparing to face whatever awaited her on the other side of the door.

With a heavy dose of trepidation, Nurse Patsey rushed to Jamie's bedside. The scene unfolding before her made her feel like she had stepped into a nightmare. Jamie's body writhed and convulsed, contorting in an almost supernatural manner. It was as if unseen forces were puppeteering her every



movement, turning the young girl's once peaceful hospital bed into a battleground of chaos. As Nurse Patsey looked upon the harrowing sight, her mind involuntarily traveled back to a distant memory when she reluctantly accompanied an ex-boyfriend to the theater to watch "The Exorcist." The film's shock-inducing depiction of demonic possession had seared into her consciousness, leaving haunting imprints that had lingered ever since. The memory resurfaced now, with Jamie's convulsions eerily reminiscent of the possessed girl from the movie, evoking a nasty sense of *déjà vu*.

Deep down, Nurse Patsey couldn't help but entertain the thought of supernatural forces at play. She questioned if perhaps the hospital should call in a pair of priests, just as she had seen in the film, to exorcise whatever malevolent presence seemed to have taken hold of Jamie's fragile form. And Nurse Patsey wasn't even Catholic. The boundaries between reality and fiction blurred in her mind, adding an unsettling unease to the already distressing situation.

Gathering her courage, Nurse Patsey forced her trembling hands to steady themselves as she leaned over Jamie, seeking to assess her condition. The young girl's muscles quivered and jerked involuntarily, like marionette strings pulled by an unseen puppeteer. It was an alarming sight, making it difficult for the nurse to ascertain the exact nature of Jamie's affliction. The frenzied movements created a chaotic dance of uncertainty, impeding Nurse Patsey's attempts to gather crucial information and devise a plan of action.

Nurse Patsey had developed a deep affection for little Jamie, treating her like her own daughter since she arrived at the hospital one year ago tonight. They spent their afternoons playing board games together, and Patsey had even been

fostering Jamie's growing interest in painting. Seeing Jamie in such a state, writhing and convulsing, was unbearable, and she felt a rising sense of panic for the little girl. She dashed to the wall and frantically pressed the bright red emergency alarm, then ran back to Jamie, holding her tight to help control Jamie's seizure before she flung herself from the bed. Shrieking at the top of her lungs, she cried out for help, "Doctor! Doctor! Somebody, please help! Jamie is dying!"

\* \* \*

Doctor James Hart was in the middle of his midnight rounds and checking on the children's rooms when he heard the buzzing alarm and Nurse Patsey's screaming. Doctor Hart had been here not more than a week since his last stint at Haddonfield Memorial Hospital. He took the job at the Children's Hospital because his specialty was pediatrics, and he had hoped for some honest-to-God peace and quiet (*and* a larger salary). So the alarm and screams were a *very* rude awakening for him. Doctor Hart ran down the hallway as quickly as possible; his checkered blue tie was flying over his white doctor's coat. Once he arrived, he saw the little girl foaming at the mouth and Nurse Patsey restraining her body from bouncing up and down on her bed. James walked briskly over to Nurse Patsey, pushed her aside, took over the restraint, and shouted, "Nurse, go down to the nurses' station on the first floor. Get more help up here as soon as possible, and call Loomis! Quickly!" Nurse Patsey was so stunned that he shoved

her out of the way like that, that she almost began to cry.

“NOW! GO!!!” Doctor Hart shouted.

Within a minute after Nurse Patsey left the room, four more nurses showed up at Jamie’s bedside. “Right, we need to restrain her body. Nurse Brody, please help me strap her chest down,” the doctor ordered, “and be gentle. We don’t want to break her. We want to save her!”

Two more nurses at the end of the bed strapped her legs down, and one inserted a mouth guard into her mouth so that Jamie wouldn’t bite her tongue off. They were wheeling Jamie’s bed into the operating room a minute later. “Get these lights on, now!” Doctor Hart yelled out.

A nurse turned on the operating room lights, and Doctor Hart flipped the switch to turn on the overhead surgical lights. Jamie’s convulsions steadily declined on the way there, but Doctor Hart was concerned because she wasn’t waking up. The doctor held his stethoscope up to Jamie’s chest, and his worst fears were realized - Jamie wasn’t breathing. So Doctor James Hart did the only thing he could think to do - he needed to perform a tracheotomy. “Nurse, I need a scalpel.” He said while feeling Jamie’s throat.

“Doctor, are you serious?” Nurse Patsey asked.

“Yes, dammit, now give me the fucking scalpel. I need to help her breathe, or this little girl will suffocate to death!” He replied angrily.

Doctor Hart’s intensity shook Nurse Patsey, but she did as she was told and handed the doctor the scalpel.

Just as he was about to perform the incision, Doctor Hart heard a voice from behind him.

“Wait!”

It was Doctor Samuel Loomis, Jamie’s current psychiatrist.

Doctor Hart hoped that with everything in his body that Loomis wouldn't remain in *that* position for much longer. Loomis had always had a stick up his ass about Jamie's entire treatment at the Children's Hospital. Loomis had thought that the best treatment for her was an angry old man, hell-bent on forcing a little girl to help *him* solve a previous patient's issue. That the solution for the dead patient would be the solution for the living one. *What a crock of shit*, is what Doctor Hart thought. Hart was an actual doctor, a real doctor that saved real lives. As far as James Hart was concerned, all Loomis seemed to be able to do was eradicate life via his former patient, Michael Myers. James thought to himself, *why in the fuck did I call for Loomis to be here, anyway? Fucking procedure, that's why.* It didn't matter now, anyway - Doctor James Hart needed to save this little girl's life, and damn quick. Before Doctor Hart could move, though, Sam grabbed his arm and hauled it away from Jamie's neck.

"Sam, get your fuckin' hands off of me. And what in the hell are you doing in the O.R., anyway?! I called for you, yes. But you need to wait OUTSIDE, god dammit. I need to help this little girl. She can't breathe and will die if I don't do this, can't you see that?!"

"She'll stabilize," Sam retorted calmly.

His wispy old voice seemed calm somehow. James took a deep breath, breathed, and put the scalpel down. Doctor Hart realized that taking the man at his word instead of James's own common sense could backfire, but what if the old fart was right? *I hate this crotchety old motherfucker. I should report him to the medical board for interference.* James thought privately to himself. However, the look he was giving Loomis indicated just as much as he was thinking.

Jamie suddenly stopped moving entirely and closed her eyes.

"You see?" Loomis said.

"See?!" James turned to Sam, glaring, "What I see is that the girl is *fucking dead*, Sam."

Jamie's breathing started up again, slowly and steadily. Her chest rose and fell. But soon, she started breathing normally. James looked back at Jamie and couldn't believe what he was seeing. Though he'd never admit this, even to himself: Doctor Hart couldn't tell if he was either more amazed that Jamie started breathing again or was more pissed off at Sam being right. He walked out of the operating room briskly after giving Sam one final glare, went to his office, and buried his face in his hands. He was beside himself that he almost cut open a little girl's neck because of a panicked judgment call. He was also beyond pissed off that somehow a shrink knew better than he did as a medical doctor. James opened his desk cabinet and pulled out a small emergency bottle of Chivas Regal and a short whiskey glass. He poured the Scotch and took a large gulp.

From that point onward, Doctors James Hart and Samuel Loomis rarely crossed paths.

\* \* \*

*The Shape loomed over the lifeless body of the old man. Michael admired his work. A grotesque masterpiece had been created, a firm, undeniable example of the Shape's unparalleled brutality. Once weathered and wrinkled, the old man's face was now a horrifying vision of destruction, unrecognizable beneath the mask of violence. Blood, bone, and fragments of brain matter mingled together, painting a macabre portrait on the floor. The pungent stench of death permeated the air, mingling with the metallic tang of*

*freshly spilled blood.*

*With measured steps, the Shape departed from the scene, his gaze fixed ahead on the path that led to Haddonfield. Each footfall resonated with a purpose, his heavy boot inadvertently crushing an eyeball that had escaped its owner's skull. The sickening squelch beneath his sole served as a reminder of the gruesome trail he left in his wake.*

*As the Shape ventured into the night, the moon cast a hauntingly blue glow upon his hulking figure. Shadows danced and flickered around him, mirroring the darkness within his soul. His strides were deliberate, propelled by an inexorable pull toward his ultimate destination. Like a siren's call, Haddonfield beckoned, drawing him ever closer to his intended prey.*

*The Shape's mind, obscured by a shroud of malevolence, fixated on the girl. Thoughts of her consumed him, fueling his insatiable hunger for chaos and terror. The rhythmic thud of his footsteps matched the beat of his relentless determination, heralding his arrival. In the depths of his being, he knew that the girl awaited him, her fate intertwined with his own.*

*With every step, the Shape embraced the darkness that clung to his essence, allowing it to envelop him like a cloak of night. His baleful presence grew stronger, radiating an aura of palpable dread. Unaware of the impending storm approaching, the town of Haddonfield was poised to become a stage for his twisted madness. As he advanced through the lonely night, the Shape's purpose solidified. His unholy mission, driven by an insidious force that defied comprehension, propelled him forward. He became the embodiment of fear, an unstoppable force on a collision course with destiny. Haddonfield would soon bear witness to his gruesome performance, and the girl would come to understand the true depths of his darkness.*

## Chapter 2

The following morning, Dr. Samuel Loomis found himself pacing anxiously along the dimly lit hallway of the Haddonfield Children's Clinic, dressed in his worn brown and tan suit. His brisk strides were accompanied by the rhythmic tap of his cane hitting the floor, an unwanted trophy of the fateful night in 1978 that forever changed his life. The failed attempt to kill Michael Myers had left him with a permanent limp and a cane. The pain was still excruciating some days. Deep within his heart, Dr. Loomis carried a profound yearning, a deep seeded wish that the explosion he had triggered all those years ago had brought an end to not only Michael but to himself as well. But fate had played a cruel joke, leaving him scarred and disfigured, forcing him to bear the burden of his failures for the rest of his life. The unsightly burn scars on his face mirrored the scars of his soul. As time passed, his traumatic experiences took a toll on his physical appearance, prematurely aging him beyond his years. The lines on his face spoke of the wounds he carried deep within, each representing a failure, a regret, a haunting memory.

The events of the previous Halloween had only exacerbated his torment. Despite being in his early sixties, the trauma

of his past had aged him further, making him appear as if he were pushing eighty. The pain and traumas had etched themselves onto his very being, leaving him with an air of weariness that couldn't be shaken off. The memories of the more recent killings of 1988 had haunted him every day since, and the pain in his leg jetted into Sam's mind, thoughts of Michael's brutality, of being thrown through a glass window at Haddonfield Elementary. Each twinge of pain brought back visions of the horrors he had faced, evoking physical discomfort and resurrecting vivid memories and overwhelming anger.

Dr. Loomis had always been known for his fiery temper, but it had transformed into a raging inferno of unbridled rage in recent months. Even the slightest discomfort or irritation could trigger an explosive outburst. His cane became a tool of intimidation, a means to exert control over those who dared to cross his path. If a staff member failed to meet his expectations, they would be subjected to his furious tirades or even a firm strike from his cane. The blows were never severe enough to inflict actual harm, of course, but they did serve as a clear warning that they had crossed a line. Even Jamie, the young girl under his care, had felt the sting of fear in his presence. He wished she didn't fear him, but he couldn't blame her.

Sam's mind was consumed by his obsession to uncover the truth behind Jamie's condition. The frustration of being unable to pinpoint the exact source of her troubles gnawed at him relentlessly. He had dedicated an immense amount of time and effort to understand just what the hell had been happening to her, but his endeavors had yielded no answers. However, his concern for Jamie remained constant. He genuinely feared for her well-being, his apprehension deeply rooted in his disbelief that her struggles could be attributed solely to a conventional



mental health issue. This was something different, something far more sinister. Medication alone couldn't provide the solution. Deep within, Dr. Loomis sensed Jamie was engaged in an internal battle he couldn't see.

In recent months, the frequency and severity of Jamie's seizures had escalated, reaching an alarming level. The violent convulsion she had experienced the previous night had solidified Dr. Loomis's belief that a deeper pathology was at play, one that eluded the countless scans and tests conducted thus far. He sensed a vicious and elusive element within her brain activity, demanding his full attention. Driven by an insatiable need to unravel Jamie's mysteries, Dr. Loomis paced back and forth, his cane striking the floor with a resounding thud that was audible throughout the hospital ward. Each step he took brought him closer to a breakthrough, or so he hoped.

Dr. Loomis approached his contemplation of Michael and Jamie with a deliberate pace, meticulously considering every aspect of their complex cases. He was a realist and a pragmatist, acknowledging the elusive nature of the absolute evil that had confounded him for years. Yet, he persisted in his relentless pursuit of understanding, refusing to let fear or doubt deter him.

During his fifteen years treating Michael Myers at Smith's Grove Sanitarium, Dr. Loomis had become a figure of fear among the staff. Their trepidation had grown to such an extent that, on the scheduled Wednesday visits when Loomis met with Michael, nearly half of the nursing staff would conveniently take the morning shift off, avoiding any encounters with the imposing doctor. Sam's nervous mannerisms and how he referred to Michael as an "it," as if he were some dangerous, untamed beast, instilled extreme unease within the administrative

staff. The higher-ups grew increasingly nervous about keeping Loomis as Michael's psychiatrist, leading to five administrative hearings over his period of care aimed at removing Michael from his care.

Under ordinary circumstances, Dr. Loomis would employ his persuasive skills (he'd essentially wax philosophically about Michael until they couldn't take it anymore) to sway the decision-makers, ensuring Michael remained under his supervision. Although Loomis exasperated the doctors, they reluctantly acknowledged that no one understood Michael's case as profoundly as he did. However, they concealed their agreement, fearing the consequences of provoking Loomis further.

Despite Dr. Loomis' persistent efforts to be heard, his words fell upon deaf ears. The staff at Smith's Grove held a deep-seated disdain for the doctor, fueling their dismissal and fear of his claims. Even the skeptical medical board overseeing Loomis' methods questioned the validity of his assertions, casting doubt on his credibility. But it was Michael's own parents who remained the most resistant to Loomis' unsettling conclusions. They clung stubbornly to the belief that their son was nothing more than a normal, albeit troubled kid, choosing to deny the horrifying reality that their own flesh and blood had brutally taken their daughter's life.

Loomis believed Michael's parents' claims of a normal upbringing were genuine. However, in the wake of Judith's murder, he saw beyond the façade of Michael's parents, perceiving their innocence and sincerity in claiming a seemingly ordinary upbringing for their son. Judith, Michael's sister, had once embodied promise and potential, shining as an exceptional student with a future brimming with possibilities. Delving

into Michael's younger sister, Laurie Strode's confidential background, Loomis discovered no traces of mental illness, finding her trajectory equally bright. It appeared that both siblings were on a path toward success and happiness. That is, of course, until the cataclysmic event of Judith's murder in 1963 and the traumatic events of 1978, shattering Laurie's life forever. Inexplicably, the lone outlier of the family, Michael, had become a cold-blooded, unstoppable killer—a psychopath consumed by pure evil.

The administrative staff at Smith's Grove remained steadfast in their belief that Michael was nothing more than a catatonic, incapable of causing harm. Disregarding Loomis's vehement protests and testimony, they dismissed his calls for transferring Michael to maximum security. And after his escape and massacre in 1978, Loomis almost lost his mind when they relocated him to a minimum-security medical prison in Richmond during his comatose period after the inferno. Once again, they should have heeded Loomis's warnings, for Michael escaped, leaving body after body in his wake.

Sheriff Brackett of the Haddonfield Police Department was the only one who had partially embraced Loomis's belief in Michael's inherent evil. However, even he had harbored doubts until he witnessed the shredded corpse of a dog Michael had been feasting on in his childhood home and the murder of his daughter that very same night. Following the murders of 1988 and the attack on Jamie Lloyd, the world began to awaken to Loomis's words, slowly accepting the unfathomable darkness lurking within Michael. But to Loomis, it was all too little, too late. If only Smith's Grove had heeded his warnings from the beginning, if only they had cared enough to act, perhaps the nightmare could have been prevented.

Amid the relentless pacing, the striking of the cane reverberated through the hospital ward, and Dr. Loomis's mind raced with a sense of urgency. Jamie's condition had escalated, her seizures becoming increasingly frequent and severe. Last night's violent convulsion was a chilling indication of a deeper pathology at play, eluding all the scans and tests conducted thus far. It was as if an elusive and insidious force was manipulating her brain.

With each stride, he could feel the responsibility on his shoulders, bearing down on him. Dr. Loomis was acutely aware of the fear he instilled in the hospital staff. They viewed him with suspicion and unease. Even after everything, they whispered behind his back and avoided his presence whenever possible. His intense focus and determination had rendered him an enigmatic figure—an embodiment of the horrors he had witnessed and the relentless pursuit of justice that consumed him. But Dr. Loomis refused to allow their discomfort to deter him. He knew that the key to unlocking the secrets of Jamie's condition lay within her consciousness. He needed to speak with her, to delve into the depths of her mind and unearth the hidden truths that could sever the tenuous connection she shared with Michael.

Although unconventional and deemed unacceptable by the medical community, Sam's theory whispered to him in the darkest recesses of his thoughts. It was the idea that when Jamie had touched Michael's arm just before his descent into the infernal pit, a fragment of Michael's malevolence had passed into her. It was an unorthodox hypothesis, required massive leaps in logic, and risked his medical license if spoken aloud. Yet, deep within his being, he believed there was more at work here than mere coincidence.

He had witnessed Jamie's sudden transformation, a gentle and loving child turned into a vessel of violence. The inexplicable attack on her foster mother, followed by her lack of any recollection, gnawed at his conscience. The nightmares and seizures that intensified as the anniversary of Michael's rampage approached only served to reinforce his conviction. An invisible thread connected Jamie and Michael—a connection that defied logic and medical explanations.

Dr. Loomis's contemplative steps quickened, driven by a relentless pursuit of answers. He knew that time was slipping away, that the longer he delayed, the more treacherous the situation would become. Lives hung in the balance, and he needed to decipher the enigma that entangled Jamie's mind. Dr. Loomis was a man haunted by his past failures and tormented by the atrocities committed by Michael Myers. But he clung to hope—a glimmer of light in the encroaching darkness. He would confront the unspeakable evil that lurked within Jamie, face it head-on, and in doing so, perhaps exorcise the demons that had plagued his soul.

\* \* \*

Rachel Carruthers was sleeping. She was uncomfortably sitting on a chair with her head resting on Jamie's bed. She arrived at the Haddonfield Children's Hospital just before midnight. Rachel was woken up from a restful sleep the previous evening after receiving a call from the medical staff at the hospital. She was told that Jamie had had her worst seizure to date.

If that wasn't enough to give Rachel a good dose of panic-induced anxiety, she was then told that Dr. Hart had almost cut open her throat before Dr. Loomis intervened. Rachel had bordered on the idea of suing the bastard. Rachel couldn't stay mad for long as worry completely overtook her mind. Rachel couldn't imagine not being there for Jamie when she woke in the morning, so she elected to spend the night at the hospital. With no cot available, Rachel had no choice but to sleep on an uncomfortable and squeaky office chair. Baggy-eyed, with tear-streaked mascara, Rachel woke to Jamie brushing her curly blonde hair back under her left ear.

"Hey there, funny face," Rachel said cheerfully as she rubbed her eyes.

Jamie smiled and laughed, but no sound emanated from her mouth. Rachel hoped above all hope that one day Jamie would wake up and start talking like it was no big thing, but still, she couldn't or wouldn't speak. Jamie used to talk and ask so many questions about everything and anything that sometimes Rachel wished she would just shut the hell up. Now she wanted nothing more than to have Jamie scream questions at her. Sam told Rachel a few months back that the only explanation was a residual shock after last Halloween. Sam thought her voice would return in time, but it was unlikely to rise above whispers. So, week after week, she hoped, but the only change was just as Sam had said—just little whispers on occasion.

Jamie pointed to Rachel's smudged mascara. "Wha... Oh, thank you." Rachel cleared her eyes with her finger.

The two stared at each other for a minute and sensed, but did not say, what they were thinking; a year ago, they faced an absolute evil and almost lost their lives in the process. That they were incredibly thankful for being here today, together

and very much alive. Survivor's guilt is a bitch, though. Rachel lost her boyfriend and the family dog, and her mother was almost stabbed to death by the little girl in front of her. Neither Jamie nor Rachel had moved on. They were both, in a way - stuck in the past. Stuck in that night. The depression alone was turning Rachel into a kind of semi-reclusive bitch. Sure, she had friends, but when she would hang out with them, Rachel wasn't really there; and when she was, she was temperamental, to say the least. Her mind was still back on that cold, dark night a year ago.

Rachel and Jamie's loving stare was broken when a huge Doberman lunged powerfully at the window behind Jamie's bed, barking loudly. The dog's wet paws were dirtying up the window glass. With no more than a whisper, Jamie exclaimed, "MAX!" But all that came out was air and no sound, as if her vocal cords were severed entirely, leaving nothing but air pressure escaping her lungs. Tina Williams, Rachel's best friend who essentially amounted to being a second sister to Jamie, pressed her head to the glass next to Max. Tina growled through the window, "LEMME IN!!!"

In her excitement, Jamie turned around and sat on her knees on the bed, facing the window, and opened it as fast as she could. Fresh air filled the room, and Max flew in and fell to the floor, his legs splayed. Max picked himself up and jumped on the bed. He eagerly began licking Jamie's face clean, slobber and all. Tina climbed through the window next, and, like Max, she fell to the floor. Tina began to laugh hysterically. Rachel had a notion that Tina had already started drinking, and it was only ten in the morning. Something colorful was behind Tina's back, and Jamie was curious. Once Tina was up off the floor, Jamie wrapped her arms around Tina and began to search around

Tina's very stylish leather bomber jacket. "What is this? What are you looking for? I wonder what Rachel is hiding behind door number two!" Tina had slyly passed the mystery item over to Rachel while Jamie was trying to find it on Tina.

Tina began to dance in front of Rachel, getting ready for the big reveal, and then turned to the side, revealing a beautiful pink princess costume dress for Jamie. Jamie uttered loud whisper noises that indicated excitement and hand-signed, "Is this for me?"

"Who else would it be for?" Rachel said.

Tina giggled and said, "Looks like Billy is gonna have to fight a lot of the other boys off for your attention, Jamie!"

Amidst the commotion caused by Max, Tina, Rachel, and Jamie, a deep, gravelly voice pierced through the noise. Doctor Sam Loomis stood sternly at the entrance to Jamie's room. His fatigue was apparent, and he was clearly not in the mood for these young ladies' silliness. Asserting his authority, he sternly stated, "What is going on in here? Dogs are not allowed here. Remove it from the hospital now. Please and thank you, young Ms. Williams."

Tina turned to look at Sam with disdain, considered giving him the finger, and then turned back to Jamie and rolled her eyes, "Sorry, Jamie."

She leashed up Max and said, "Bye, Jamie. I'll see you tonight!"

Tina and Max left the way they came in, through the window. Tina hit the ground outside the window with a seemingly painful 'thump' followed by a yelp of pain from Tina on the other side. Rachel looked out the window and yelled, "Didn't break anything, did you?"

"Only my pride, Rach! But that's nothing new!" Tina laughed.

"I'll meet you at my place here in a few!" Rachel shouted



down.

"I kinda want something sweet. Mr. Frosty's?"

Rachel gave Tina a thumbs up. "Sounds good to me."

Tina began singing to herself and walked into the park behind the hospital with Max.

Rachel turned towards Jamie, knelt to Jamie's level, and softly said to her, "I'll be back tomorrow afternoon, okay? I spoke with Mom and Dad, and they sent their love. I knew you'd want to see them, but remember that they had to leave town for a few weeks for Uncle Harry's funeral in Chicago. You didn't know Uncle Harry, but Mom was very close with him. Remember those hours-long phone calls they used to have? So, this time, I can't blame her for not being here with you today. And I am so, so sorry I won't be able to come tonight. I want to see you in your princess costume so badly, Jamie, but I promised to help at the Tower Farm." Jamie's mood went from exuberantly happy to visibly pissed off when she heard that.

Jamie turned her head away from Rachel, and tears began to roll down her cheeks. "Oh, Jamie, I know you wanted me here tonight. This isn't an excuse, but my therapist said it would be really good for me to do something for myself, and Tina told me they needed help setting up the party, so I couldn't say no."

Jamie refused to move and began to cry. "Oh, Jamie, please look at me."

Rachel leaned over and put her hand on Jamie's shoulder. She wanted to make this right, but she didn't think she could right now. Rachel closed her eyes and kissed the top of Jamie's head. Jamie frowned and dropped a few more silent tears. Since she had been admitted to the Haddonfield Children's Clinic, Jamie had begun to think that her foster parents hated her. Sure, Richard had come almost once a month since her admission to

the hospital, but not this month. Considering the funeral, she knew better than to think that he would come this month. But she knew that he could have come earlier at some point this month, too.

Darlene was another story entirely. She hadn't come but for a solitary time, and Jamie blamed herself for Darlene's apparent avoidance. Jamie just wished Richard would stop telling her they were still a family and that they loved her when she knew better. Jamie didn't want hope. She wanted to know what her reality was. But she wanted to live with Rachel when she moved to college next year. Rachel said she might adopt her after all, and Rachel had never lied to her. Rachel said it would be great if Jamie went with her to Chicago for college. They would get a small apartment, Rachel would go to class and work part-time, Jamie would go to a good school in a bigger, more exciting city away from all of this, and they would be happy. Jamie hoped she'd be out of the hospital soon and in a real home with her sister.

Right now, though, Rachel wanted to party at the Tower farm. She knew how difficult this time would probably be, so why would she not be here for Jamie? Teenagers and grown-ups were hard to understand.

Rachel said, "I love you" again.

Jamie didn't respond. Rachel got off the bed and grabbed her purse hanging on the back of the chair she had slept on. She gave Jamie one more look and began to leave the room. Suddenly, the window that Tina and Max had just climbed through was smashed open, startling everyone. They watched as a rock was thrown through the window, scattering shards of glass everywhere. Rachel instinctively jumped on Jamie's bed and held the frightened girl in her arms, protecting her from

the hail of glass. One of the jagged pieces of glass embedded itself in Rachel's forearm, and she emitted a brief but startled cry, more of shock than of pain. The rock hit the floor, skidded across the tiles, and landed in front of Sam's feet. Slowly, Jamie and Rachel turned their gaze upward, their eyes meeting Sam's stern countenance as he picked up the rock. Attached to the stone with a rubber band, a folded piece of notebook paper awaited its unveiling. Sam carefully removed the band and gingerly unfolded the paper, revealing its contents—bold black marker strokes forming a written message:

**"THE EVIL CHILD MUST DIE"**

\* \* \*

Doctor Loomis' gaze bore into Rachel with a stern gravity, conveying an unspoken message that resonated within her. The realization struck her like a lightning bolt—this was no mere prank. The rock hurtling through the shattered window had been intentionally launched to frighten and intimidate Jamie. Sensing Jamie's curiosity and concern, Rachel turned her attention to her sister. Jamie's hands moved fluidly in sign language, seeking answers to the pressing question that hung in the air, "What does it say?" Her eyes, a mix of trepidation and anticipation, fixated on Rachel, craving an explanation.

Sam, his expression lined with caution, observed the interaction between the two sisters. He recognized the significance of this moment, watching Rachel deal with the fragile balance between protecting Jamie and revealing certain truths to her. Pausing briefly to gather his thoughts, he realized he was on a

tightrope. This sweet, innocent little girl had already received enough trauma. Should he dare pile more on top of her? Should he continue this pursuit and, in doing so, damage Jamie so far beyond repair that she could become a permanent resident of the psych ward?

“Nothing, sweetheart. It’s okay. Let’s get you moving for the day.” Rachel said.

Rachel looked around at the glass-covered floor and said, “Maybe we should clean this mess up first.”

After cleaning up, Sam and Rachel got Jamie ready for her day and set her up for breakfast in the cafeteria. Before leaving Jamie at her table, Rachel said, “Jamie, let me say sorry again, okay? I really am. When I get back, I promise a thousand times over that I’ll come take you for a weekend with me. Just us two, okay?”

Jamie’s silence spoke volumes. Her shrugged response a poignant expression of resignation. She avoided making eye contact with Rachel, withdrawing into her thoughts and emotions. Sensing her defeat, Rachel reluctantly left Jamie to her meal, her heart heavy with guilt for not staying by her side during this tumultuous time. Accompanied by Sam, she followed him towards the front door of the hospital, the broken glass and rock still lingering heavily in her mind. As they stepped outside into the embrace of the late October sun, an unexpected warmth permeated the air, defying the usual chill of the season. Sunbeams caressed Rachel’s face, momentarily soothing her troubled mind. Seeking respite from the sun’s glare, she retrieved a pair of sunglasses from her purse and gently placed them on her face, shielding her eyes from the brilliance surrounding them.

Now removed from the confines of the hospital and beyond

the reach of Jamie's ears, Sam and Rachel found a moment of privacy to talk about the reality of the situation.

"Dr. Loomis, I'm feeling selfish for leaving her right now. Especially after what just happened." Rachel said, staring shamefully at the ground.

"There would be very little that you could do if you stayed." replied Sam, "Besides, you could use some time to, well, how do you girls put it? Let your hair down?"

Rachel chuckled at Sam's attempt to understand young women momentarily and said, "I know, Dr. Loomis, but someone should be here with her. She's surrounded by hospital staff, sure. And that's fine and dandy, but she needs a family. You know she needs a family. And to be honest, Doctor, I think I'm all she's got left."

"You would be surprised at how close Jamie and I have become this past year," Sam said, and Rachel winced at this notion, but she didn't know quite why, "I will keep my eye on her. My good eye that is."

Sam guided his hand toward his left eye. His cloudy and dark right eye was the victim of a bad cataract. Having developed a familiarity with Sam for the past year, Rachel had grown accustomed to his distinctive appearance. Their weekly encounters had forged a bond, gradually desensitizing her to the burn scars that marred the right side of Sam's face. To her, he was no longer defined by his disfigurement; instead, she saw him simply as another human being. The scars had become an accepted part of his identity, blending into the tapestry of his character.

On the other hand, Tina was still very much creeped out by Sam Loomis, not just because of his face. It was his demeanor that got to her. "Spooky Sam" was the moniker that Tina would

occasionally use to describe the good Doctor Loomis.

"I hear you, Dr. Loomis, I do. But look at what just happened. People in this town still blame her, a *little girl*, for what happened last year. How it got out that Michael Myers and Jamie are related, I don't know, but if I find out who let that nugget of information out, I swear to god, I'll stab them myself."

Sam looked at Rachel with an almost hypnotic stare, "Rachel, listen to me. No one told anyone about that. I believe the public deduced it after Jamie did what she did. They don't know the specifics, thank Christ, but nonetheless, we *are* living in a small town. It is widely assumed that people know things about everyone in small towns. The assumption isn't wrong."

Rachel took a moment before asking her next question. She fished out a lighter and a pack of Kents from her purse, took a cigarette from the pack, and lit it, taking a long, satisfying drag. She hadn't always smoked. Not until recently, anyway. Stress had gotten to her in ways she didn't think were possible. The smokes helped. The smell of burning tobacco mingled with the crisp autumn air as she brought the lit cigarette to her lips for a second drag. Rachel stared at the flower bed in the entryway of the hospital. "You aren't fully convinced she isn't *like* him, are you?"

"Are *you*?" Loomis retorted almost instantly.

Rachel looked away from Sam's gaze, ashamed about her internal feelings about Jamie, which had steadily worsened over the last year. She knew she shouldn't think for two seconds that Jamie was like Michael. But why did she stab her mother, then? Why is she now institutionalized like her uncle was? Why won't she speak? These were just a few critical questions that had been burning in Rachel's head for the last three hundred and sixty-five long days. Some pieces weren't adding up. And

yes, she had thought - for a moment - that maybe Jamie wasn't exactly an ordinary little girl now. That something changed in her. That maybe one day, she'll not only be mute but completely joyless. Empty. And then... No, she couldn't finish her thought. It hurt her to even think about it, let alone say it.

"If you stay," Loomis continued, "you will only increase her ability to sense your doubts in her. She's a smart, deductive girl, Rachel. Take it from an old man... Go live while you can, Rachel. Time flies when you're young. I will be here for Jamie. She will be safe. You have my word."

Still unconvinced she was making the right decision about tonight, Rachel resigned to meet up with Tina and get this party underway. She was still very nervous for Jamie but felt a little better and appreciated the old man's kind words of wisdom.

Doctor Loomis turned and looked at the front doors of the hospital. He had thoughts of evil in his mind.

There was somewhere very important he needed to be.

## Chapter 3

Rachel and her dog, Max, were hanging out with Tina at the Mr. Frosty ice cream parlor in downtown Haddonfield. They were sitting at a table having ice cream sundaes, and Tina could not for the life of her shut up about Mikey, her third boyfriend this year. It was an incessant drone that was really starting to piss Rachel off, especially considering that Rachel got little to no sleep the evening before, and what sleep she *did* get was highly uncomfortable, as she was sitting down on a chair with her face planted in a hospital bed. Alas, Rachel had always been the good friend. She was always as attentive and energetic as she could be when it came to whatever Tina was prattling on about. But she could be harsh when she wanted to be. Cold, even. Especially this last year. There had been a few times where Tina thought Rachel and her were done for as friends, but Rachel had always called to apologize for being short with her. Tina had understood what both Rachel and Jamie had been through, and had given them time and space, which Rachel had always greatly appreciated.

Today was a mixed bag of feelings. Rachel was excited to do something fun for a change, but was incredibly upset at the idea of leaving Jamie behind. A year to the day since the terror they had faced, and she was going off to a party. Her conversation



with Dr. Loomis had helped ease Rachel into the idea to go, and she really did want to. But Tina, who was sitting in front of her, babbling about Mikey at top volume, was giving Rachel a headache from hell. "...and then he totally blew me off like I was some kind of a fucking dime store hooker. I just don't know, Rachel, Mikey is cute and all, but Jesus tap dancing Christ he can be a major fucking asshole. Maybe I should just call off this whole plan of me going out with him to the Tower farm party and call it a fucking day. Fuck! I fucking should, shouldn't I? You know what, when we get to your place, I'll call him up and tell him to go FU..."

Rachel had had enough. She bent over the table and put her hand over Tina's mouth. "Slow *down*, Tina! Let a girl get up to speed here. You know you're talking a mile a minute, right? Rapid fire speed. And has anyone ever told you that you cuss too much? I mean, I'm no saint here, but Jesus, Tina. That was a lot of fucks." Rachel was now at her breaking point and she could feel the vein in her forehead ready to pop. Goody-two-shoes was falling to the wayside, and if Tina didn't take the hint, she was going to go into full bitch mode.

Tina looked guilty and replied, "Oh, honey, I'm sorry, Rachel. Look, I know you're going through a lot right now. I mean, what with... well I don't really need to say it. But look, you said it yourself that the Doc told you to go have fun before you can't anymore. And I know that you've got a lot to go and do. Getting the party ready to rock and roll is a big project. So, how about this? I *don't* call Mikey and tell him what I was gonna so eloquently tell him to do, and instead I give you my word that I will check on Jamie tonight myself and report back to you. I'll guarantee you that Jamie is going to have a totally amazing fucking time at *her* party. Then, tomorrow, when you get back

from *your* totally awesome party, you two can share how much fun you both had. You, of course, will leave out all of what I am *sure* will be raunchy parts!"

Rachel laughed big time at this. The feeling that it was okay to laugh was spectacular. She felt positive about her decision now, almost euphoric. It would be okay. It would all be just fine and work out. They would both have a blast tonight, and then they would see each other tomorrow. Rachel might be a little hungover in the morning, but it'd be okay.

They finished up their floats (and gave the remnants to Max, who lapped them up approvingly and greedily) and walked back to Rachel's place. One good thing about Haddonfield was that the town was small enough to walk from one end of the other in about an hour and a half. The weather was amazing. The news had said earlier that day that the high would be somewhere in the mid sixties, unseasonably warm for late October, and the walk was a huge stress reliever for Rachel. The two young women walked up the driveway of Rachel's house. An obnoxiously loud engine roared from behind them. They turned around to see Mikey rolling up the side of the road in his jet black '67 Camaro convertible, which sent Max into a fit of barking, and Rachel had to hold onto the leash for dear life.

"Baaaabyyyyyy!" Mikey yelled to Tina.

Tina looked solemnly at Rachel and said, "I'm sorry, hon, but the man has a hold on me! I gotta jet for right now, but I'll call ya later, okay?"

Rachel looked at the ground, lightly kicked it pretending to be miffed, and said "Ah, it's okay. No big thing. I could use a little alone time for a shower and a nap, anyway. I'll meet you at the Tower farm, I gotta head there in about two hours to help them get ready, so, I'll see ya when you get out there."

Tina ran to Mikey in his Camaro, jumped in, and landed her head on his lap. Mikey looked down at his girlfriend and they locked lips for what Rachel thought must have been hours. *Jesus, they are hot for each other, I wonder if they'll come up for air?* Rachel thought, laughing to herself. Still snickering, Rachel turned and led Max inside her two story family home. Seeing as Darlene and Richard were in Chicago, she had the whole place to herself and Max. She put the key in the deadbolt in the door. It had already been unlocked. *Did I forget to deadbolt the door?*

As she entered the bathroom, Rachel wasted no time in starting the shower, the sound of rushing water drowning out the suffocating stillness that had enveloped the house. Wanting badly to break free from the oppressive silence, she craved the comforting embrace of music. And not just any music would do; she needed the raw power and cathartic release that only heavy metal could provide. Stepping into her bedroom adjacent to the bathroom, Rachel's eyes scanned the record box filled with tapes that she kept next to her dresser. She picked out the newly released Alice Cooper album, "Trash," which had hit the shelves back in July. Its vibrant cover art beckoned to her. She eagerly plucked the cassette from its case and swiftly inserted it into her trusted Casio Boom Box.

She hit play and stepped in the shower.

The room was suddenly engulfed in the blistering guitar riffs and thunderous beats that blared from the speakers. The melodic chaos of Alice Cooper's music blasted through the walls, drowning out any lingering traces of silence and replacing them with visceral energy. It was a paradoxical juxtaposition,

for anyone observing Rachel purely based on appearances would never suspect her penchant for such intense and abrasive tunes. Yet, here she was, immersing herself in the fiery catharsis of heavy metal, finding comfort in its unapologetic expression. As the water cascaded down her naked body in rhythm with the pounding music, Rachel let herself be carried away by the savage melodies and searing lyrics. The turbulent storm of emotions that had been brewing within her since the horrifying incident of the previous year had now found release in the music. It was a sanctuary that allowed her to temporarily forget the haunting memories that lurked in the recesses of her mind.

\* \* \*

*Hidden within the dense foliage of the tree line, the Shape patiently observed the scene unfolding across the street from the hospital. His piercing gaze fixated on the boy, consumed by seething jealousy, as he callously hurled a rock through the girl's window. That girl belonged to him, and this audacious interloper would not be allowed to impede his desires. With calculated precision, the Shape commenced his methodical approach toward the boy, a predator closing in on his unsuspecting prey.*

*Silent as a specter, he trailed the child, shadowing his every move, an invisible force of nature. Step by step, the Shape ensured that no conceivable witness could thwart his dark intentions. Even if someone tried, they would be met with the same fate as this boy. Eventually, the boy sought refuge within an equipment shed nestled discreetly behind the hospital's sprawling grounds. Crouched low,*

*his attention fixed on the broken window, the boy anticipated the sound of terrified screams, a sinister smile creeping across his face, reveling in his mischief.*

*Unbeknownst to him, the towering monstrosity behind him remained hidden from his senses. Oblivious to the imminent danger lurking mere inches away, the boy concluded his voyeuristic session, rising from his hiding place to exit. As he turned around, fate conspired against him, and he collided with the Shape's mammoth figure, toppling forcefully onto the earthen floor. Gazing upward, his widened eyes met the horrifying sight of the monster before him, brandishing an ominously large kitchen knife. Panic engulfed his mind, triggering a cascade of alarm bells within his brain. Pleading for mercy, the boy mustered his trembling voice, hoping to appeal to the masked monster's humanity. Yet, the Shape found amusement in this feeble attempt, his head swaying side to side in a sick gesture of dismissal. The Shape began his relentless advance upon the boy, each deliberate step was the sound of impending doom. The child's pleas transformed into anguished screams of despair, which fell upon deaf ears.*

*At that moment, the boy realized the bitter truth: there was nowhere to flee and no one to rescue him from this nightmarish ordeal. His cries for help served only to invigorate the Shape, fueling the sadistic thrill that coursed through its veins, solidifying its reign of terror.*

*With an unsettling intensity, the Shape stooped down, his towering figure dominating the boy's fragile form. A surge of malevolence coursed through his veins as he violently seized the boy's right arm, hoisting him into the air with a single, monstrous hand. Suspended helplessly, the boy became a pitiful marionette in the Shape's sadistic play. Peering into the child's terror-stricken eyes, the Shape reveled in the raw emotion on display. Tears streamed down the boy's face,*

*intermingling with the sweat of his escalating panic. Each sob and shriek only fueled the Shape's insatiable thirst for dominance. In a futile attempt at self-defense, the boy thrashed his legs, launching desperate kicks at his assailant. But his feeble resistance only magnified his plight's sheer hopelessness.*

*Unperturbed by the boy's futile struggle, the Shape tightened his grip on the child's arm, his fingers like iron vices. In one swift, brutal motion, he contorted the adolescent limb with ruthless efficiency, snapping it like a fragile chicken wing. The boy's anguished howls filled the air, reverberating with the intensity of his torment. The excruciating and unrelenting pain etched itself upon his features as he writhed in agony. Callously, the Shape cast the boy aside, his monstrous strength propelling him forcefully to the ground. The impact shattered the delicate architecture of the boy's shoulder blade, causing him to convulse in sheer agony. Clutching his broken arm with a trembling hand, the boy cradled his shattered limb, futilely attempting to alleviate the unbearable pain that consumed him.*

*Surveying the desolate surroundings of the equipment shed, the Shape's eyes fixated on a dormant lawn mower tucked away in a corner, an innocent object about to be transformed into an instrument of horror. With chilling resolve, he relinquished his knife, dropping it carelessly to the ground, and embarked on a deliberate path toward the ominous machinery. As the boy's gaze flitted between hopelessness and confusion, the Shape watched the despair envelop him, relishing in the powerlessness that washed over his broken spirit.*

*With a sinister grasp, the Shape's elongated appendages snatched hold of the lawnmower, hoisting it triumphantly into the air. Its grotesque form loomed over the defenseless boy sprawled out on the shed's cold, unforgiving dirt floor. Fear and agony contorted the child's face as he writhed, screaming his lungs out for help. There would be no help. The Shape brandished the lawnmower, its weight*

*threatening to escape its inhuman grip. An unsettling stillness settled upon the shed as if the air was holding its breath.*

*The Shape's attention focused on the boy, relishing the terror that would befall him. Time seemed to crawl as the child's wide, disbelieving eyes met the menacing gaze of the rusty blades nestled beneath the machine. The rough metal edges tainted a rusty green from years of usage stared back at him. Every serrated tooth harbored the potential to rend flesh and shatter bones. As the Shape held the lawnmower above him, a silent plea within the boy's mind continued to ring, hope for salvation from the unthinkable fate that loomed overhead. Yet, in the depths of his despair, he couldn't tear his eyes away, compelled to bear witness to the dark fate that had befallen him. At that moment, the boy's existence hung by a thread, suspended between the innocence of his past and the cruel, insane reality of the present moment.*

*With potent force, the unholy monster thrust the weighty lawnmower onto the boy's defenseless abdomen. The sickening impact shattered the child's fragile frame, breaking several of his delicate ribs like brittle twigs. An excruciating pain and terror gripped his entire being, leaving him momentarily paralyzed in disbelief. The Shape, its sinister intentions unabated, seized the lawnmower's starter rope in a frenzy, yanking it haphazardly to ignite the motor. The mower blades lurched to life for a fleeting moment, their rusty edges sinking into the boy's exposed stomach, mercilessly carving their way through tender flesh. To the boy's twisted horror, the engine failed to sustain its furious combustion.*

*In a gruesome twist of fate, two razor-sharp blades became ensnared beneath the shattered remains of the child's rib cage, each insidious tooth gnawing at his flesh. Agony consumed his every fiber, a torment stretching into eternity. The boy's anguished cries now transformed into choked sobs, gasping for breath in the sea*

*of unimaginable suffering. The Shape, driven by an insatiable hunger for carnage, pulled the starter rope once more. A medley of metal and machinery erupted as the lawnmower roared to life, its blades spinning with reckless abandon. The mechanical whirring reached a crescendo, drowning out the boy's haunting cries as the relentless machine tore through his vulnerable midsection with sadistic precision.*

*Innocent blood, vibrant and crimson, splattered and pooled across the floor of the equipment shed. The boy, caught in a nightmarish realm between life and death, discovered an unfathomable realm of agony that defied the boundaries of human endurance. The swirling and relentless vortex of pain pushed him to the precipice of sanity.*

*In the cranking noises of grinding metal and the sickening squelch of flesh being rendered to mincemeat, the boy managed to summon one final act of defiance. A primal scream, born from the depths of his ravaged soul, tore through the air, a desolate plea for mercy in the face of unspeakable horror. But the unrelenting, swirling lawnmower blades ripped through his weak lungs, severing his voice and extinguishing his life, leaving behind only echoes of his final, tortured wails.*

*The Shape let the mower handle go, and there was silence. Peace, even. He turned to leave the equipment shed and briefly looked back at his work. At his art. Liters of the child's thick blood soaked the sawdust on the shed's floor, and streaks fell from the walls. The boy was eviscerated. His midsection, for lack of a better term, was gone. Michael Myers shut the door to the shed and walked among the trees, using the foliage as cover as he continued back to his earlier vantage point. He stood outside, far enough away from the entrance to the hospital to see yet not be seen. He saw the woman that hit him badly with the truck last year, and his blood intensified with rage. What made it worse was that the man who haunted his very few coherent*



*thoughts was standing beside her. Doctor Loomis. Michael's fury knew no limits but he must contain himself at this juncture. It was too soon to make a move on these people. Or they would be mad. Sure, they let him have his fun, but they always had the last say.*

*These people could be dealt with later. He needed to follow them, find their plans, and trap them.*

\* \* \*

As the water cascaded over Rachel in the shower, the melodies of the Alice Cooper album filled the bathroom. However, her ears merely registered the faint background noise as her mind drifted to another realm plagued by memories that refused to fade. She envisioned a mask that seemed crafted from delicate porcelain, its ghostly visage etched into her consciousness. It conjured an image of a wickedly sharp kitchen knife mercilessly piercing the tender flesh of her upper arm. The floodgates of her recollections burst open, and Rachel's mind raced through a tumultuous labyrinth of fragmented memories. She saw Jamie, her sweet little stepsister, her innocent face etched with terror as she ran and screamed for salvation in the enveloping darkness. She saw pumpkins transformed into leering jack-o'-lanterns, casting their eerie glow, and the skeleton costumes that adorned the bodies of trick-or-treaters. But the image of Jamie persisted, insidiously intertwining with her thoughts. This time, Jamie wore a blood-soaked clown costume, an ominous figure standing at the apex of a stairwell, brandishing gleaming scissors in her right hand. The figure was devoid of emotion, an embodiment of emptiness and lethality.

Rachel's mind continued its wayward journey, traversing a

landscape fraught with turbulent encounters. She remembered visiting Jamie in the sterile confines of the hospital and the heartbreaking discussions with her mother about the uncertain future that awaited Jamie within their family. She recalled tense arguments, filled with frustration and despair, as they debated adoption arrangements with Social Services. Her thoughts spiraled in a chaotic dance, revolving relentlessly around Jamie's presence. A ghastly image materialized in Rachel's mind, one she immediately dismissed with a forceful mental push. It was a vision of Jamie. She was lifeless, peacefully lying within the confines of a funeral casket, forever separated from the world of the living. She banished that horrifying thought to the farthest corners of her consciousness, struggling to ground herself back in reality. The abrupt barking of Max, their loyal canine companion, sounded through the house, jolting Rachel from her contemplative stupor. Startled, her heart pounded in her chest, and she nearly leaped out of her skin at the unexpected sound.

"MAX!" Rachel hollered with urgency, a mixture of alarm and concern. "What's wrong?!" she called out, her voice betraying her anxiety.

She waited for a response, but the dog kept barking. Rachel turned off the shower, grabbed a towel from the rack on the bathroom wall, and quickly dried off. Wrapping the towel around her, Rachel went downstairs, water still dripping from her curly blonde hair. Max was barking the whole time. She followed the barking and found Max in the kitchen. Max was not just barking but growling in between. He was looking out of the screen door leading to the backyard. Rachel felt that whatever was out there wasn't friendly, and she was starting to get nervous. "Max..." Rachel said in a disapproving yet cautious

voice.

She grabbed Max's collar, pulling him back from the door, out of the kitchen, and into the living room. She sat the big dog down on the couch and pulled him close into a hug, slowly petting him to ease his fast breathing pattern. Rachel felt his heart running wild. "What did you see, boy?" Rachel asked.

Max whined quietly and gently put his head down on Rachel's lap. They sat like that for a few minutes before Rachel moved his head off of her lap and said, "I gotta get dressed, Max. Now, sit on this couch and don't move! No more barking!"

Rachel went back upstairs. Max began to bark again before she even had a moment to get dressed. "Jesus Christ, Max." Rachel muffled to herself and went back downstairs.

Before she could get her eye on Max, the phone began to ring.

\* \* \*

Jamie was playing in the art room with some of the other kids at the hospital. Tables covered in protective lining paper were lined up and down the large room. It was painting day, one of Jamie's favorites. Billy Hill, an orphan from out of state with a bad stutter who had a rather sizable crush on Jamie (under pain of death, she'd never admit to it, but she kind of liked him as well), was working on his "masterpiece," as he called it. He started on the painting well enough, but Billy was getting upset with his work. It was supposed to be a mountain range, but because they were working with cheap watercolor, it looked more like someone had dropped brown vegetable soup on his paper. Jamie looked at him with a smile, walked over to

him, and looked down at his artwork. She stared at it with a confused look. She turned her gaze back up to Billy with yet another smile, which made Billy smile in turn. They enjoyed each other's company here. Billy's family was non-existent, and he had been brought to the Haddonfield Children's Clinic from Salt Lake City, Utah, when he was just two years old. Billy had an unfortunate and heavy stutter, which prevented him from saying much of anything coherent. However, since he had laid eyes on her, Billy had always made brave attempts when talking with Jamie.

"I-i-i-it loo-oo—oks lii-ike sh-sh-sh-sh-iii-t. Shit." Billy stuttered out, looking at his artwork with disdain and embarrassment.

Jamie shook her head and smiled at him again. She took a pencil and marked out where the mountain range *should* be on his artwork, helping Billy to redeem his piece. Billy, though, didn't understand what she was doing. Jamie wanted to tell him he should have mapped out his work lightly with a pencil before he put the paint on the page. It needed an outline. But that wasn't all. She wanted to tell him a lot of things. Like how much she liked him, maybe even loved him. But she could not speak to him. Not that she'd have the courage to tell him those private thoughts. She could handle everything she had been through, but confessing true love and expressing her feelings towards Billy? Well, it was this close to impossible. When one is as young as she, it can be easier to face down pure evil itself than it is to confess a crush. Jamie wanted to speak something fierce, but something inside her

*(the nightmare man)*

was holding back her voice.

Billy took the initiative and thought about what Jamie had

drawn out on his paper. He took his paintbrush and, as gracefully as he could, reformed the watercolors into an image that actually started to resemble the mountain range he had pictured in his head. All hope was not lost after all! Billy was so excited that he turned and smiled at Jamie with a vast, almost overzealous grin, “Th-th-thank yo-u-u-u, J-J-J-Jamie-e!” And with that, he gave her a brief but highly exciting (for both of them) side hug. God, did he want to be close to Jamie. Did he ever! This wasn’t grown-up love, of course, but it was one of deep, honest care and understanding, which, after being abandoned at such a young age, was more than Billy had thought most *adults* were capable of.

Jamie could have melted in that hug right then and there.

!?!ZAP!?!

In the depths of Jamie’s subconscious, a searing, unbearable pain surged through her right temple, causing her to lose her equilibrium and nearly topple over. However, Billy’s quick reflexes saved her from the imminent fall, though the sheer shock of the excruciating sensation left her utterly terrified.

!?!ZAP!?!

Without warning, the piercing pain struck again, threatening to induce a seizure similar to the previous episode she had in the recesses of the night. In response, Billy erupted into panicked screams, pleading for help in a stuttering voice that struggled to escape his trembling lips. “H...H...H... HEEEELLLLLPPPPPP!!!!”

!?!ZAP!?!

Once more, the jolt of electricity coursed through her, but this time, the pain inexplicably subsided, transforming into a strangely comforting lull, coaxing her towards a conscious slumber. Gradually, vivid visions infiltrated her mind.

Flashes of golden leaves cascading from majestic sycamore trees mingled with fragmented images of her foster parents' home, flickering intermittently in her mind's eye. Jamie could hear Max barking with unrestrained panic. Through the hazy haze of her vision, she caught a glimpse of Rachel, drenched and wrapped in a towel, her presence tangible. Powerless to resist, Jamie's only recourse was to capture the elusive fragments of her vision on paper. As if trapped in a trance, reminiscent of the relentless zombies from "Night of the Living Dead," she mechanically shuffled towards the adjacent drawing wall. With confusion laced with resolve, Jamie retrieved a set of black and red markers, the tools of her ephemeral revelation. Through her right eye, she witnessed Max's barking form, and with her markers, she depicted a gaping mouth filled with jagged teeth, its crimson maw shrieking in protective anger. The scene shifted, and Max lunged, sinking his teeth into the hand of a menacing figure.

It must have been *him*...

...the nightmare man.

It was. She knew it was. Jamie saw her uncle's hand descend, striking Max with brutal force, causing the poor creature to yelp and flee in fear.

In a blink, the vision abruptly dissipated, and Jamie found herself back in the realm of reality. Standing motionless, she fixed her gaze upon the drawing she had feverishly etched on the wall during her trance-like state, her mind racing to retain every fragment she had witnessed. As she gingerly retraced her steps, a sudden collision jolted her senses. Startled, she emitted an air-filled would-be scream and hastily turned around, only to find Dr. Loomis behind her. Gasping for breath, Jamie tried to steady her trembling body. Seizing Jamie's quivering shoulders,

Sam, an extremely concerned presence beside her, implored with distress, "What did you see?!?"

Jamie mouthed the word at first and then tried with all her might to utter some kind of sound that would make any sense, "M-m-m-maaaa-aaa-xxxxxxxxx!!!!!"

It wasn't just a whisper that time. Jamie *screamed* Max's name. Sam's eyes widened in shock. He immediately ran to the nearest telephone on the wall, put it to his ear, and dialed Rachel's home. He began to feel sweat creeping on his brow. His patience was running thin, and he was becoming increasingly anxious with every ring. He was frantic and terribly worried that he was too late to save Rachel.

Ring...

Ring...

Ring...

Ring...

Ring...

Finally, after the sixth ring, and just before the voice message machine picked up, Rachel picked up the phone. Dr. Loomis sighed briefly. "Hello?" Rachel asked, sounding out of breath.

"Rachel, this is Sam. Is Max alright?"

"What?" Again, out of breath.

"Is Max alright?!" Sam asked hurriedly.

"Dr. Loomis? No. Well, I don't know, I can't find him anywhere. He's been barking at a cat or something since we got home. Dr. Loomis, I'm frightened." Rachel said.

"Well, go and check on him. Go on, now!"

Anxiety gripped Jamie as she met Sam's gaze. A solitary tear welled up in her right eye, teetering on the brink of escape. Her mind swirled with worry and concern for Rachel. Each thought was laced with a sense of impending doom. However,

in the tumultuous storm of emotions, a peculiar realization dawned upon her, and with it came an uncanny understanding of certainty. Jamie's worst nightmare had materialized before her very eyes, IN her eyes. It was true. Her uncle had returned from the grave, defying all logical explanations. Somehow, somehow, he had managed to claw his way out of that infernal pit of hell that the cops had consigned him to over a year ago.

But what sent shivers down Jamie's spine was not the resurrection of her uncle alone. It was the turmoil within her mind that chilled her to the core. The visions that plagued her were intensifying, growing more vivid and disturbing with each passing moment. No longer mere episodes of dissociation or epileptic fits, she now understood them for what they were—genuine, tangible glimpses into her uncle's twisted perception. Astonishingly, Jamie had unwittingly become a conduit, granted the unsettling ability to peer through her uncle's eyes and witness the world as he saw it. The boundary between their minds had become blurred, leaving her to grapple with the repercussions of this newfound connection and the terrifying knowledge it bestowed upon her.

Billy grabbed Jamie's right hand. He hoped that would help to calm her down. Jamie jumped a little, not expecting it, but appreciated the gesture and gently squeezed his hand back.

Rachel was back on the line.

"Dr. Loomis, Max isn't in the house..." Sam looked around the room in an absolute state of fear and paranoia and tried to grasp just what the hell he was supposed to do, but he knew this feeling well enough and controlled it.

"Rachel, listen to me very carefully." Sam began, "You need to leave the house as quickly as possible. Right now! Drop the phone and GO!"



“Oh, Jesus, it’s *him*, isn’t it, Sam? It’s Michael.”

“Don’t worry about it. Just get out.”

“Should I call the police?” Rachel asked.

“No,” Sam replied, “I will call. But you need to leave the house immediately. Go on, NOW!”

\* \* \*

Rachel’s breathing was erratic and dry, and her mind was ablaze in fear as she bolted out of the house, her bathrobe hastily wrapped around her trembling body. Panic surged through her veins, intensifying with each breath. It was a fear she thought she had left behind in the past year, but now it clawed at her with a raw intensity, like merciless shards of glass cutting into her brain. She quickly attempted to regain her composure, but in her current panic, finding solace seemed impossible. The realization that she was standing outside in broad daylight, still clad in her soaking-wet bathrobe, gave her an intense sense of vulnerability. It wasn’t merely a feeling of being physically exposed but an emotional nakedness that exposed her to the world. The fear bore down on her, twisting her insides with dread. The protective armor she had constructed since the previous year’s relentless attacks had vanished, leaving her feeling defenseless.

Dr. Loomis’s words echoed in her mind, declaring the house unsafe and amplifying her growing sense of freakish paranoia. And then there was Max, missing without a trace. Rachel’s world began to feel like it was crumbling around her, as if the ground beneath her feet threatened to give way. The looming

presence of Michael Myers lingered in her thoughts, a chilling reminder that her life could be extinguished in an instant by the slash of his blade. Visions flooded her mind, forcing her to confront the horrors of Halloween night in 1988. Sundae, the cherished family dog, lay lifeless on the carpet, her body stiff with rigor mortis, her entrails torn out and partially devoured by some monstrous creature. The memory resurfaced, vivid and haunting, accompanied by the overwhelming sorrow of loss. Jamie, her foster sister (no, Rachel, your SISTER - your real sister),

had narrowly escaped a similar fate, struggling desperately to survive. The scars of that harrowing night remained etched in Rachel's soul, and now she grappled with the unthinkable notion of reliving that nightmare.

Was she going to have to go through this nightmare again?

Rachel's body quivered, and her senses heightened to an almost unbearable degree. It wasn't just the chilling presence of Michael Myers that sent shivers down her spine; it was the sensation of countless pairs of eyes fixated upon her. As she stood there, clad only in her disheveled bathrobe, she felt the weight of the entire neighborhood's gaze upon her. The curtain-twitching fuckers peered through their windows, their curiosity piqued by the spectacle of the frantic woman loudly calling out for someone named Max. The feelings of fear and embarrassment combined to wreak havoc on Rachel's mental state. Rachel sat on the curb in front of her house, trying to calm down and wait for the police.

It took ten minutes for the cops to arrive, and the waiting game was painstakingly long. To Rachel, it felt like an honest to

fuck eternity as she sat on the curb waiting for them. Two of Haddonfield's finest police officers, Deputies Nick Ross and Tom Farrah, pulled up next to her, and the blue and red emergency lights and siren were so unnecessarily loud that Rachel had to put her hands to her ears. "WOULD YOU TURN THAT OFF? JESUS, NICK, THE POOR GIRL'S GONNA GO DEAF!" One of the officers yelled to the other one as they pulled up.

The one who must have been Nick, a young buck, to say the least (he couldn't have been more than twenty-one years old), clicked some dials on the dash control, and the sirens stopped.

"Ms. Carruthers?" Deputy Nick Ross said as he exited the passenger's seat.

Rachel got up, blood rushed to her head, and she almost lost her balance momentarily. She stabilized and was relieved that they showed up, even if one of them was someone who probably wasn't over a year or two older than she was.

"Yes, thank you both for coming. My dog is missing, and I can't find him anywhere."

"Don't worry, Ms. We'll find him..." Deputy Tom Farrah exited the driver's side and slammed his door behind him. Tom Farrah looked like someone that has been around for a while, seen a thing or two, and could do something. This made Rachel more comfortable and reassured.

Deputy Farrah came around and stood next to Deputy Ross on the sidewalk, both looking around the neighborhood. Deputy Farrah looked like he spotted something.

"...Black and brown Doberman?"

To Rachel's astonishment, Max was running at full speed down the sidewalk, and drool was flying away from his mouth, his tongue flaying and his collar clanging. Rachel braced for

impact, and Max jumped up, almost pulling down her bathrobe. Max started licking at her face, covering Rachel in thick dog slobber. "Settle down, Max! It's so good to see you too, buddy!" Rachel looked at the officers, "Thank you both so much for coming!"

Rachel stood up and held Max by the collar—finally, some peace of mind.

"No problem, it's what we do." Said Deputy Farrah.

"Rescue cats." Said Deputy Ross.

"Find dogs." Said Deputy Farrah.

"That's our job." Said Deputy Ross.

Both deputies looked at each other, clearly recognizing they were being moronic, like something out of a bad sitcom.

"Anyway, Ms. Carruthers, I'm glad he's back with you. As for us, we better get going. Is there anything else we can help you with?" asked Deputy Farrah.

Rachel considered this for a moment. She did want someone with her right now. She felt better now that Max was home and next to her, but in reality - she was still scared. But she also didn't want to inconvenience the officers any longer, and after their little sitcom speech about finding dogs and rescuing cats, she didn't know if they were the ones she wanted around anyway.

"No, I think we're okay now. I sincerely appreciate you coming by to help." Said Rachel.

"Have a good day, Ms." Said Deputy Farrah.

The deputies got in their car and left.

Later tonight, they would both be dead.

\* \* \*

Rachel's heart still pounded in her chest, and sweat clung to her forehead. Her neighbors probably thought she was fucking crazy after what had just happened. *My GOD, Rachel. Screaming like that? What is wrong with you?* She thought to herself. Her mind drifted to thoughts of Jamie, and she hoped she was okay. She hoped her mind was at ease and she didn't have to worry about Max, let alone Rachel herself. She went back inside the house with the dog. She bent down and gave Max a pet. "Don't run like that again, Max. I'm serious. You scared the ever-loving shit outta me!"

Rachel gave Max another rub behind his ears and went upstairs to get dressed. She entered her room and stared at her dresser before calling Jamie instead. Rachel wanted to reach out to her and tell her she loved her. Tell her she would be around soon, and things would be better soon. Rachel sat down by the bedside table and picked up the phone. She dialed the Children's Hospital. "Hello, Haddonfield Children's Hospital. How may I help you?" The attendant said. Rachel recognized the voice.

"Hey, Janet. This is Rachel. May I talk to Jamie, please?"

"No problem, hon. Just a moment. She gave us quite the scare today. I hope everything's well."

"It will be. Thanks, Janet."

"Of course. Please hold."

There was a brief hold, and then she heard Sam's voice on the other end of the line. "Rachel? Is everything okay?"

"Yes, Dr. Loomis. Max is home safe. He must have just chased after a rabbit or something. He was chasing cars. Who knows? Can I talk to Jamie, please?"

There was a pause. Rachel could sense that Sam wasn't telling her something. "Dr. Loomis, what is it? What's wrong?" She

asked.

Rachel began to think there was something wrong. "Dr. Loomis - are we safe?"

"Yes, of course. It's nothing. Just a paranoid old man, that's all. Here's Jamie." He replied.

Rachel knew better. But in reality, she didn't want to ask. She didn't want to know.

A whisper - "rachel?"

"Jamie! Everything's fine, Jamie. I know something scared you, but please don't worry, okay? I'm fine. Max is fine. And I love you. Tina will be by later to see you, okay? To make sure you are okay. But I miss you already, Jamie. I've got to go, but I love you, okay? Things are gonna be better. I promise. I'm sorry about tonight. I really am. I love you lots, and I promise, promise, promise I'll be around before you know it." Rachel was holding back tears.

"I loo.llooov...love you." Rachel heard the call click, and her heart sank.

Rachel surveyed her surroundings, taking in the familiar comfort of her bedroom. The chaos that had consumed her moments ago now seemed distant, replaced by a newfound clarity. As the adrenaline coursing through her veins gradually subsided, her mind began to piece together the puzzle before her. A resolve settled within her as Rachel made a decision. The Tower farm party, once an enticing prospect, lost its luster in comparison to the needs of her little sister, Jamie. The bond they shared was unbreakable, a love that surpassed any desire for teenage fuckery. Rachel's heart swelled, recognizing that Jamie needed her presence now more than ever.

Rachel went to the closet door and rifled through her tops. She tossed aside what she didn't want, like hats after a war. She

was looking for something simple. She grabbed a plain white button-up, threw it on the bed, removed her robe (which had now dried after running around the house and outside), and went to her dresser. She pulled out a bra and snapped it on. She took a moment to admire her slim figure. A year after the madness, Rachel at least *looked* better than ever. She spent time on her body, that's for sure. Countless hours at the gym. And for who? Who cared? She looked good and was proud of her accomplishment. As a kid, Rachel's confidence was never the best in the world. When she was fourteen and starting high school, she was on the heavier side and had a proper crater face. Well, by God, she was not about to go through life looking like that, and so she got to work. Rachel started eating better and going to the gym regularly, begging her mom, Darlene, for a membership to attend step aerobics. She lost thirty pounds between the start of her Freshman year and the summer of her Sophomore year. Her skin cleared up, and every boy was chasing her now very *fit* tail.

Brady showed up after two years of off-and-on dating with a few boys that she downright hated. Brady was tall and cute. But to Rachel, he had the most essential thing a boy could possess - he was nice. He wasn't quick to romance her to get into her panties. He was more than happy to remain patient and wait for her. They dated for a year, starting early in Rachel's senior year. Much to Rachel's dismay, however, Brady began to show signs of losing his patience toward the end. Rachel assumed it was because he was getting ready to make a real commitment, even thinking about marriage, and was getting nervous. The truth was, sadly, that he had been playing the long game and had waited a year to get her alone in a bedroom. And on the night he had planned for that perfect moment, she had to babysit.

Halloween night, 1988. Before the terror began that night, Rachel was taking Jamie trick or treating. They stopped at the Sheriff's house, and his daughter, Kelly, opened the door wearing that goddamn stupid tee shirt that said: "Cops Do It By The Book." Rachel had that tee burned into her memory. She could see from the doorway that Brady was in the living room with his shirt off. They were *fucking*. The slut lured Brady in there as easy, horny prey.

Later that evening, both Brady and Kelly would be brutally murdered by Michael Myers.

Rachel's guilt about feeling *almost good* about their deaths had never really left her. She could have forgiven Brady in time, maybe even Kelly, too. Now she'd never have the chance.

Rachel grabbed the plain white button-up shirt she had picked out from the bed and put it on, and as she put her head through it, she heard a rustle coming from down the hall - from Jamie's room. A paralyzing fear gripped her, sending a surge of adrenaline coursing through her veins. The fine hairs on the back of her neck stood at attention. The rhythm of her heart faltered, skipping several beats as panic set in yet again.

Rachel tactfully and methodically walked to her bedroom door. She was careful not to try and make any creaking noises in the floorboards under her feet in case he heard her (*HE? Rachel? Come on, you know better than to panic like this. See if Max knocked something over*). Rachel took a few big, deep breaths and tried calming herself down. She closed her eyes and took another deep breath. She opened her eyes and then walked down the narrow second-floor hall. To her right was Jamie's room. As she approached the door to Jamie's room, Rachel's hand instinctively reached out for the golden handle, only to recoil at the unpleasant sensation of clammy sweat coating



her palm. The realization of her heightened anxiety sent a shiver down her spine, a physical manifestation of the fear that gripped her. Seeking solace and a semblance of control, she hastily tugged the loose sleeve of her white shirt over her hand, the fabric providing a makeshift barrier against the slick handle. The metallic handle yielded under her touch, and its cold surface starkly contrasted with the warmth of her trembling fingers. She turned it with painstaking slowness, dreading the cacophony accompanying the door opening. Hinges began to scream in the silence as the door reluctantly swung open. Rachel crossed the threshold into Jamie's room.

Nothing.

Nothing here.

Nothing to be afraid of.

Nothing out of place.

Wait. Yes, there was.

On the floor, fallen over Jamie's dresser drawer, nearest the window was a picture frame. With cautious steps, she closed the distance, the carpet fibers cushioning her movements as she kneeled, her hands reaching out to retrieve the fallen artifact. She turned it over and saw a photo of herself and Jamie at the sixtieth annual Haddonfield Fair. It was two years ago. She could still taste the funnel cake they were eating in the photograph. Two years ago. Before all of the terror began - when they were happy. When they were all a family. Part of the glass frame where Jamie's face was, had been smashed in. No, not smashed - pierced. Blood appeared to be smeared over the broken glass. Rachel's panic came back, and it was in overdrive.

Max abruptly began to bark loudly and angrily in the hallway. Still, before Rachel could register much of anything, she felt intense pressure, followed by sharp, severe, and immediate

pain directly through her neck. She looked down and saw a glimmering blade sticking out of the front of her throat. The blade was then quickly pulled back, and it tore through the right side of Rachel's neck, cutting her muscle tissue, veins, and arteries, spraying jets of blood around the bedroom, and turning Jamie's bright white wall into a crimson Jackson Pollock painting. Rachel fell to the floor, her head thudding on the blood-soaked carpet.

Then she saw him. Michael Myers. He was back from the dead with blade in hand, staring at her inquisitively in his white phantom mask. He turned and walked out of the door. Rachel's vision began to fade quickly to blackness. The last thing she ever heard was the sound of Max's feeble yelp as the madman was strangling him. The final thought she ever had was of her love for Jamie and her regret knowing she couldn't save her this time.

And then Rachel faded away into the void.

\* \* \*

Jamie was asleep on her bed when it started. A drop of sweat trickled down her temple as she lay still on her bed, enveloped by the cocoon of slumber. An unsettling unease permeated her senses, a subtle shift in the fabric of her consciousness, signaling the encroaching darkness that threatened to consume her. At first, she struggled to differentiate between reality and the ethereal realm of her subconscious. But then, with a shattering realization, the truth surged like a torrential wave.

This was no mere dream—it was a twisted, macabre broadcast, a voyeuristic glimpse into the eyes of a psychopath.

In the ethereal realm of the broadcast, Jamie's very essence seemed to merge with the insidious force that consumed her. The boundaries between herself and the relentless murderer blurred, their identities intertwining in a nightmarish dance. A surge of visceral rage coursed through her veins as if she could taste the acrid bitterness of his fury, permeating every fiber of her being. She was *him* again and could feel that he was violently angry. She could feel the wooden knife handle he was clutching. Then she felt and saw a forward, stabbing motion. Things were moving so fast that she couldn't see who he had stabbed. A profound dread gripped Jamie, intertwining with the remnants of her dreamlike state. The familiarity of his presence, and the harrowing memories of past encounters, converged into a maelstrom of terror. She could no longer dismiss it as a figment of her imagination; the threat was real, tangible, and her instincts screamed for her to take action.

Jamie bolted upright in bed. She was sweating, and she desperately wanted to scream but couldn't. Why could she do it earlier? And not now?! Her voice, or lack thereof, was starting to frustrate her more than usual. It was playing games with her.

Jamie felt familiar vibrations coming from within her. *Shit*, she thought. When the convulsions started, Jamie began to lose control of her body, and she began to seize. She knew if she didn't scream, no one would come. Staff was light this afternoon, and she thought she'd die before anyone could help her. Jamie tried as hard as she could, and finally, it happened. For only the second time in a year, Jamie used her voice. "HEEEEEEEELLLLLLLLLPPPPPPPP!!!!!"

An insane, high-pitched scream was heard throughout the hospital. Nurses arrived in her room seconds after the screaming began. They put a sharp needle in her arm, and Jamie Lloyd returned to sleep.

\* \* \*

Sitting in a chair at his desk at the police station, Haddonfield Sheriff Ben Meeker was cleaning his Ruger P89. Most of the officers that served under Sheriff Meeker used revolvers, but Ben fought to have his own personal sidearm. After his military service in the sixties and seventies, he came to rely on Ruger semi-automatics. He refused to let them go in favor of the more traditional police revolvers. Guns were also a major hobby of his (he owned several). While cleaning out the chrome barrel, Ben wasn't thinking about guns. He was thinking about Halloween. And how much he hated the fucking holiday. It wasn't just because of the tacky decorations (he didn't care much for *any* holiday for the same reason) and the incessant ringing of his doorbell (Ben Meeker detested the ringing of his doorbell so much that on Halloween, he removed the bell from the door, shut out all the lights, and parked his car around back just to avoid any trick 'r' treaters who might think he has a chocolate bar). No, he hated Halloween (and friends and neighbors, if there ever were a reason, this would be it) because his daughter had been *murdered* last Halloween.

Kelly was Ben's world. After his wife, Kathy, had died when Kelly was seven, it had been Kelly and Ben, the inseparable father and daughter. He had protected Kelly every single day

of her life. He had loved her with everything in his heart. But then *he* came home and snuffed her out of existence. *He* - that psychopathic son of a bitch Michael Myers. Ben Meeker told that fucker *exactly* where he could go when he sent Myers down that shaft and straight into hell. Sure, it felt good to exact revenge on the bastard, on the same night, no less. But it didn't make it better. Not really. All it did was harden the man and covered him in what seemed a figurative callus. He knew he was becoming close to unapproachable these days. He knew he probably needed to retire or at least take a very, *very* long vacation.

But as of the last year or so, Ben now had yet another reason to hate Halloween, and it was currently limping its ass right on into his police station. Ben could hear the fucker's cane hitting the floor with each passing step from a mile off - Doctor Sam  *fucking*  Loomis. Sure, he helped save lives last year; Ben couldn't argue his heroism (or was it insanity?), but getting to know Loomis over the last three hundred and sixty-five days wasn't easy. In fact, getting to know Loomis was a right pain in the ass. Ben knew he wasn't the only one that thought this, that Sam was crazier than his own homicidal psychiatric patient. And here Sam comes, right through the goddamn cop shop front door. And he looked just as mad and as crazy as ever. And he was undoubtedly here to make Sheriff Ben Meeker's Halloween even more miserable than it was already going to be.

"Sheriff Meeker, we need to talk," said Sam in a gravely, almost haunted voice as he walked towards Ben's desk.

"Sam, today isn't great. Can we resch..." Sam cut Ben off mid-sentence.

"Now, Sheriff. No time." Said Sam intensely.

Ben pulled the cleaning rod out of the barrel of his Ruger, sending oil flying from the rod. He stood up, inserted the magazine on his desk into the gun, locked the slide, and put the gun in his waistband holster. He stared into Sam's eyes with fiery intensity.

"You come barging into my office on the anniversary of the day my daughter was murdered, and *you're* making demands, Loomis?! I told you now wasn't a good time, and I Goddamn well meant it!"

"Sheriff, he's back."

Ben, stunned for just a moment, tried to process what he was feeling and what he was just told.

"Fine, Loomis. Let's go take a fuckin' walk, then." Said Ben, clearly fuming.

\* \* \*

Sam Loomis and Ben Meeker made their way through the station, dodging several officers diligently filing paperwork, typing on their computers, smoking cigarettes, and drinking black, stale coffee. Ben ran a tight ship, and the officers toiling away showed that. They were walking down a long, beige hallway toward the garage when Sam broke the silence between them and spoke. "You think I need the idea of Michael just to keep going, don't you, Sheriff? That I obsess over him because I've got nothing left but him. But, as a matter of fact, Sheriff, I do have something left. The little girl. Jamie."

Ben looked at Sam as he spoke, taking in his words as best he could but couldn't help himself. "Sam, I'm afraid for that

girl. I'm not afraid she'll be murdered in some terrible way by Michael Myers. I'm afraid you will be the one to push her right over the edge of sanity."

Sam ignored Ben's comments, pulled him to the end of the hall, and continued, "You must understand, Sheriff, that this isn't a man. I thought you understood that after your experience with him last year. I truly do not believe we killed him last year. There are places in my heart that have grown colder every single day since, and I know it is him."

"What the hell are you talking about, Sam?" Ben asked, "We blasted holes in his chest the size of moon craters, shoved him down a mine shaft twenty feet deep, and blew it the fuck to hell." Ben was beyond agitated now.

A year to the day of his daughter's murder, and here's Sam, saying that they didn't kill him, that he's still out there. Bullshit. Ben knew damn well the evil bastard was dead. Had to be!

"Sheriff, I need your help! I know he is coming tonight. I can feel it. Jamie can feel it. What have you got to lose by helping me? If I'm wrong, I'm wrong, but if I am right... How many people did he kill last year? Do you remember? Your own daughter, Sheriff?"

Ben's eyes grew into blood moons, a vein popped in his skull, and he grabbed Sam by his beige trench coat and almost lifted him off the ground. "HOW COULD I FORGET, YOU FUCKING CRAZY SON OF A BITCH!"

"Of course, you can't forget!" Sam shouted back.

"Sam, fuck you, and fuck Michael Myers. He's dead. DEAD, goddammit! I watched him BURN!"

"Sheriff," Sam began as Ben set him down,

"You have to hear me. Ben, believe me. You have to know that I know him. Michael Myers is not some man you can just kill.

There is something in him, something evil. True evil. Pure evil. I knew it in my heart when I met him all those years ago. He had just murdered his sister. He was just a boy. I knew it when he stared off into the distance all those years at Smith's Grove. I knew it in 1978 when he escaped and tried to kill his younger sister, Jamie's mother, Laurie Strode. I knew it because there was no feasible way that he would have known who Laurie was. And then I went from knowing to seeing the evil at work when Michael got up and walked away after I put six rounds into his evil heart. And again when he woke from his coma last year and went after Jamie".

Sam continued. "When we threw him in that mine shaft, Sheriff, I hoped he would burn in hell, but in my heart, I knew that hell would not have him. He simply will not die like a normal man. Against all rational science and human understanding - Michael refuses to die."

Ben's police radio crackled loudly, startling and almost making him jump. "Sheriff?"

Ben held down the receiver and responded, "Meeker, here."

"Sheriff, you're wanted at the cemetery."

Sam and Ben looked at each other solemnly.

"After you," said Sam.

\* \* \*

There was some severe reluctance on Ben's part when he allowed Sam to accompany him to the cemetery. They drove separately, and Ben was squeezing his steering wheel the entire time, pretending he was choking Sam to death. How could



Sam be so callous? How dare he mention Kelly's death. The urge to unleash his rage upon the good doctor, who he felt was ultimately responsible for Kelly's tragic fate, consumed Ben, threatening to overwhelm his self-restraint. It took every ounce of his willpower to resist the primal instinct to pummel that quack into oblivion. Yet, despite the seething anger boiling within him, Ben somehow tolerated Sam's presence. Perhaps, in the deepest recesses of his mind, he wondered if he, too, had become unhinged, questioning his *own* sanity.

Once they arrived, Loomis barely said a word. They both walked over to the crime scene. A vivid yellow tape, boldly inscribed with stark black letters proclaiming "CRIME SCENE - DO NOT CROSS," encircled the area, acting as an ominous barrier between the living and the disturbing events that had unfolded here involving the dead. Heavy with trepidation, Ben reached down and cautiously lifted the tape, granting Sam permission to step into this macabre realm. The chill in the air seemed to intensify, casting an additional layer of sorrow upon the already somber atmosphere. Enveloping the desecrated grave was a network of vibrant orange wire, a makeshift barrier erected hastily around the disturbed resting place. The once-neat mound of soil had been callously upturned, scattered haphazardly as evidence of the hurried excavation that had taken place. It was evident that whoever had dared to disturb the sanctity of this burial ground had done so with reckless abandon, their urgency visible in the chaotic aftermath. The scene teemed with activity as investigative photographers meticulously documented every detail, and uniformed police officers diligently combed the area for any evidence that might shed light on the heinous act. Each click of the camera and every whispered conversation among the authorities rang in

Sam's ears, amplifying the atmosphere of dread. Sam's spine tingled with a chill that transcended the mere physicality of the environment. Deep within, an instinctive intuition began to take shape, whispering to him the identity of the perpetrator responsible for this despicable act. However, ever the skeptic, Ben clung to a more rational explanation. He dismissed the unsettling sight before them as the reckless misdeeds of mischievous adolescents, engaging in a sickening prank designed to provoke fear and confusion.

"Probably just kids, Loomis," Ben asserted, trying to steady his nerves. "Pullin' some kind of sick prank is all." His words, spoken with a hint of bravado, attempted to dismiss the gravity of the situation they were about to confront.

But as they drew nearer, their eyes were forced to confront the grim reality that awaited them, shattering any illusions of a mere juvenile ruse.

Unlike the nightmarish events that had unfolded in 1978, Michael seemed to eschew his methodical ritual this time. The headstone, which once stood as a solemn testament to the departed, remained undisturbed, its inscription preserved in solemn remembrance. However, in a grotesque change, the coffin, the sacred vessel that cradled the deceased, had become the object of Michael's unholy attention. The scene's gravity was overwhelming for Sam, casting an indelible shadow over his soul. The grotesque image before him would haunt his dreams and torment his waking hours for the remainder of his existence.

The coffin that Michael took belonged to a young girl. The dates on the headstone read 1943-1949. The girl, Marjorie Harris, was only six years old, and Michael had desecrated not only the grave but also the poor girl's remains. The bones,

meticulously rearranged, formed a hauntingly precise straight line; each piece placed was purposeful and carefully set with intention. But the sight at the center almost made Sam look away. The delicate foot bones of Marjorie, now arranged in the shape of a foreboding triangle, bisected the line of bones. And at the apex of this macabre formation, the tiny, fragile skull of the young girl rested, a centerpiece that defied all reason. Dark, shadowed eye sockets gazed glaringly and accusingly at Sam. In those eyes, Sam saw Laurie. A tear began to well up in his right eye. He felt responsible for all of it. Self-pity wasn't something that Sam reveled in, but he couldn't help but feel it at that moment.

Having dedicated his life to unraveling the enigma of Michael Myers, Dr. Loomis had spent countless hours immersed in research, formulating theories to make sense of the unfathomable madness that consumed his former patient. Over the years, he had crafted a web of suppositions, attempting to find some semblance of rationale within the labyrinthine depths of Michael's depravity. And this one was right at the top of the list.

"Thorn." Loomis said quietly, almost a whisper.

"What?" Asked Ben.

"Nothing. Just a thought, is all." Sam turned to Sheriff Meeker, grasped his shoulder, and continued. "Ben, please believe me - this was Michael's work." Sam pointed his cane at the heresy, "He is back. You must understand that *evil* has *come home*."

Ben nodded, however reluctantly, "Okay, okay, Loomis. Let's say you're right. Let's just assume that for one moment. What would you want me to do? What's the plan?"

"First thing's first - keep quiet. Don't let anyone but your most trusted deputies know what we are looking for. Tell everyone

else to continue to do their duties as normal, but let them know to be on alert in case we need them dispatched. If it gets out that Michael Myers has returned, it will cause a mass panic. So I'll tell you exactly what I told your predecessor to do - tell your men to keep their mouths shut and their eyes and ears open."

Ben wondered what Leigh Brackett saw in Sam Loomis. Did he think Sam was just as crazy as Ben did? Or did Leigh go along with Sam's insane behavior? Ben thought he should give Leigh a call down in Florida and pick his brain later.

"Fine. We'll play it your way. But you should know that I'm only halfway there, Sam. You will have to play it straight with me, and I mean *razor-straight*. No fuckin' around, Sam. Not today." Ben said.

"You have my word, Sheriff." Replied Loomis.

A deputy approached Sheriff Meeker. "Sir, they've found a body north of here by the riverbed."

Loomis and Meeker exchanged glances. "None of this is coincidence, Sheriff, I promise you," Sam said.

Meeker nodded, and they both left the scene and got in their vehicles. Ben went out to the newest crime scene, and Sam started driving to 45 Lampkin Lane.

## Chapter 4

**M**orris Greenwood had been a dedicated bus driver for over twenty years. He had been driving the Greyhound line from Chicago to St. Louis for the last fifteen of those twenty. Morris spent his first five years on the Illinois Department of Transportation Interstate Bus Line. Morris had seen a lot of crazy shit during that time. He had seen drug addicts die of overdoses on his runs; some of their throats and mouths were filled with vomit, which gave Morris nightmares. Alcoholics have pissed themselves, vomited, spilled booze, and passed out up and down the aisles. He's seen people screwing in the far back of the bus more times than he could remember, leaving him to scrape off the aftermath from the vinyl seats. And he'd also seen his fair share of fistfights, screaming children, and all manner of familial disputes. Hell, he's even heard a wife ask for a divorce from her husband, loudly, and that same husband would follow her request with a vile punch to the face (Morris took care of *that* motherfucker so fast that he even surprised himself. Morris never liked, nor did he abide wife beaters).

Today, however, he had a spooker. A quiet spooker, but a spooker nonetheless. A spooker is someone Morris is one hundred and one percent dead afraid of. Someone unpredictable.

Someone who he couldn't read. Morris has had a few spookers before. Once, one got off his bus in Pontiac, walked straight to the nearest Middle school, and gunned down four kids and a teacher. This spooker, the man in black, got on the bus departing from Chicago. Morris was frozen in his driver's seat the second he saw the man's anonymous figure. The man in black strode in the bus, almost as if he was floating, dropped coins in the dispenser with a black-gloved hand, glided down the aisle, and sat down in the back. In his passenger mirror, Morris could see him. The man in black was dressed in a full-length black trench coat and a wide-brimmed black hat that was angled down, obscuring his face. Morris was sure this spooker didn't want to be identified. He wore black gloves on his hands, black boots with chrome spurs on his feet, and he carried a mysterious black briefcase. Morris began to get curious. He wanted to know what was in the briefcase. Was it a gun? A knife? God forbid a bomb?! The man in black was dead quiet, too. He never said a single word, and he hadn't moved an inch from his seat, even to turn his head.

Yeah, he freaked Morris out plenty.

The next stop was Haddonfield, about halfway between Pontiac and Springfield. Morris was hoping with all hope that Haddonfield would be the man in black's final destination. It would be fitting, anyway. Haddonfield had also spooked Morris, especially when he was a kid. You heard stories about that town were tales of pure dread and horror. Long before Michael Myers had shown up, Haddonfield had always been a sad, dark, and miserable place. Stories of madmen and generational moral and mental decline were the stuff of Illinois legend. In terms of Illinois legends, the insanity of Haddonfield's history was only next to the Great Chicago Fire of eighteen-seventy-one. But

that wasn't entirely it, either. The town itself felt dead inside somehow. It was like an evil cancer had eaten away at the people living there. Then, when Morris was in his late teens, he heard about Michael Myers and the babysitter murders. It chilled him back then, and it still chilled him now. Because last year, the boogeyman came back. Seemingly rose from the dead and murdered all those people. He didn't know why anyone would live in that diseased town after that. Seventy-Eight was terrible enough. But Eighty-Eight? That was a fuckin' massacre, man.

Morris pulled over into the Haddonfield Greyhound bus depot, and the man in black stood up. Morris's heart skipped about five beats, and he began to sweat as the man in black walked toward the open bus door. Morris's hair stood on every end. The man in black floated down the steps and off Morris's bus, his spurs clanking as he took each step. Morris closed the door when all the passengers were off and got the hell out of Haddonfield.

\* \* \*

"I can't get a hold of her, Sam," Tina said to Samantha, "I've been trying, but nobody picks up."

Tina and Samantha were downtown shopping for the Tower farm party when they both realized it was now about three-thirty, and neither one had spoken with Rachel since this morning, so Tina used the payphone outside of the Discount Mart to call her. While Tina was talking on the phone, Samantha wasn't thinking about Rachel - she kept thinking about Spitz. Samantha had known Rachel for only the last

few months, and the only thing she could deduce about her was that she was quiet. Granted, Rachel was fucked up after what had happened, so she has an excuse to be somewhat distant and unwelcoming of new friends. Not that Rachel was unwelcoming to Samantha, but she had never really gone out of her way to get to know her. So, if Rachel didn't want to attend the party anymore, that's on her. Besides, Samantha was more concerned about her boyfriend, Spitz, and whether or not he'd get caught when he handed the booze over later. Fucker is gonna get caught one of these days, that's for sure.

Tina hung up the phone after trying again for the third time.

"Well, let's head over there and see if she's even home. Who knows, Tina, maybe she's rethinking the party. Remember, it's a year to the day since... well, you know." Samantha said.

Tina looked at the ground and kicked dirt into the air. "I know, I know. Look, I know I should be more sensitive, but we had this whole fuckin' thing planned out. Ugh, let's at least see if she's home."

Tina and Samantha made their way to Rachel's. As they strolled along the sidewalk, the sun's golden rays filtered through the trees, casting dappled shadows on the ground. The scent of autumn filled their nostrils, a delightful mixture of earthiness, dried leaves, and the distant fragrance of harvest. The foliage was adorned with vibrant red, orange, and yellow hues, creating a picturesque backdrop. Some kids were already trick 'r' treating door to door. When they finally arrived, they approached Rachel's front door and rang the doorbell. Nobody came to the door. Tina then knocked hard on the door several times. Tina rang and knocked two more times before getting fed up. She reached above the door frame and grabbed a brass key. "Well, let's take a look."



Tina inserted the key into the lock, turned it, and opened the door. A cold shiver and nervousness fell over the two girls when the door creaked slowly open. The door needed some WD-40, bad. It creaked like something out of an old Vincent Price haunted house movie. There wasn't a single light on in the house, and Max wasn't barking. "Maybe she's not home after all." Said Samantha, who secretly hoped that was the case so she could get out of the creepy fucking place.

"Yeah, maybe she took Max for a walk." Tina looked around. "RACHEL! RACH!" She shouted. No one responded.

"Well, it's official. I don't think she's here." Tina's eyes looked around some more and then widened.

"Oh, well, let's steal her clothes!" Said Tina with a sly grin.

Samantha's initial nervous fear disappeared. Tina had always been a good friend to tag along with. Sometimes Tina had the incredible ability to make her feel invincible. If you were a friend of Tina's, you never felt alone. She could be a mess, a loudmouth, and an overall pain in the ass. But she was always good at lightening a dull or somber mood. Tina had the uncanny ability to be so exuberant and free-spirited that Sam thought she could be the only one in the world who could turn a funeral into Times Square on New Year's Eve. She was always the stereotypical life of the party.

With the new plan to steal Rachel's best outfits set in motion, Tina cackled, ran up the stairs to Rachel's bedroom, and began searching for a particular little black dress. That little black dress happened to be Tina's favorite, and she had no intention of leaving without it. Neither Tina nor Samantha noticed a thin trail of crimson leading from Jamie's room and out the back door.

"Hey, what are you doing?" Asked Samantha, who was trailing

behind Tina.

"I want that dress, Sam! It's perfect for my devil witch costume!"

"Yeah, but... shouldn't you ask Rachel first?"

Tina stopped, turned her head, and looked at Samantha, who was silently scolding Tina.

"What Rachel doesn't know won't kill her! Besides, I was the one that helped her pick it out." Tina smiled and began to laugh, "FOUND IT!"

Tina snatched the dress from the closet, not seeing the figure standing in the back corner. Tina turned around and smiled at Samantha as they walked toward the bedroom door to leave. The Shape stepped forward. Its presence was shrouded in silence. Like a phantom extending its grasp, its hand extended towards Tina's curly locks, narrowly missing its mark as she darted down the staircase in a hurry. The figure's fingers seemed to tremble with frustration and fascination, almost brushing against the strands of Tina's hair. When the girls left the room, the Shape walked to the bedroom window and looked down as he watched the two girls dash out of the front door.

\* \* \*

Jamie bolted upright in bed. She was panting heavily, and her heart was pounding fast, causing a dull ache in her chest. She was covered in a cold, clammy sweat, and her hair was sticking to her forehead. The sheets were twisted and tangled around her body, and she was shivering with a sudden chill. The nightmare that had jolted her awake was still fresh in her mind,

and the images haunted her like a bad omen. That fucking mask. Her hair stood on end just thinking about him. She could still smell the sweaty latex that carried over from the nightmare. She rubbed her eyes, trying to shake off the remnants of the dream. She knew her daydreams were always much more vivid during daylight, but this one had been particularly jarring.

Jamie felt drained and disoriented, and she looked around her room, searching for a familiar face. But there were no nurses, doctors, or anyone else in sight. Her throat felt dry and scratchy as if she had been shouting for help, but she knew that shouting hadn't been a thing she could do for some time now.

*Wait, did I?*

She tried to calm herself down by taking deep breaths and repeating in her head. "You're okay, you're okay, you're okay," like a mantra. She tried to make sounds and whispered them to herself, hoping to dispel the growing fear gnawing at her insides.

She walked towards the window and put her hand through the broken pane, wondering who threw the rock earlier. Hoping it was just some kids. She felt that's who it probably was—trying to get a rise out of her. The feeling of the cool late October breeze on her skin was refreshing, invigorating almost. And, for just one incredible moment of peace, she forgot about the nightmare and the looming sense of unease plaguing her all day. She gazed outside and saw the orange foliage filling her vista. The trees were ablaze with fall colors, and the leaves rustled gently in the breeze. It was a beautiful sight, and Jamie felt a sudden urge to go for a walk in the garden. She imagined showing Billy how to paint a fall scene, capturing the seasons' colors and mood. The thought brought a smile to her face, and for the first time in a long while, she felt a glimmer of hope.

Jamie was still very tired but didn't want to go back to sleep because of the nightmares. Not that it mattered much. Today seemed to be filled with ghosts and nightmares, asleep or awake. She could still feel him...

Jamie continued to stare out of the window. She looked down at the garden and... she *saw* him. He was watching her through the trees and brush. Not watching. Staring. Biding his time and waiting for his moment. Jamie could feel his evil eyes of fire seeping into her soul. She reacted with zero hesitation and pulled her hand in from the window. The sudden move resulted in sharp, jagged glass tearing at her flesh and leaving behind thick traces of blood on the window's glass. Jamie didn't register the cut, as she was frightened out of her mind. It was broad daylight, and yet he still stalks?

Something was wrong here, but she had no time to wait. After her experience last year, Jamie knew that time was never on her side when running from the boogeyman. Jamie's heart was pounding so hard that she felt it was about to burst out of her chest. She couldn't believe that the nightmare had followed her into reality. She tried to calm herself down and focus on what she needed to do: run. She turned and left her room quickly and in a frantic panic. As she made her way through the hospital, Jamie's mind forced thoughts in her panic about how different her life would have been if these nightmares hadn't plagued her. She had been struggling with them for as long as she could remember, and it seemed like they were only getting worse with time. She wondered if something was wrong with her, as if she was somehow cursed to live a life filled with fear and terror.

But there was no time to dwell on these thoughts now. Jamie had to focus on staying alive. She reached the door to the

basement, grasped the handle, and tried to push the door open. It wouldn't budge! The door was stuck. Jamie firmly gripped the handle again and twisted it with all her strength. Simultaneously, she braced herself and used her entire body as a makeshift battering ram, channeling every ounce of her remaining energy into a final, desperate push. Creaking hinges and strained wood filled the air as the door relented, granting her passage. A surge of relief coursed through her veins as she realized she had successfully breached the doorway. Swiftly, she ran down the concrete stairs and looked around frantically for a place to hide. She spotted a secluded alcove obscured by an array of corroded pipes. Coated in a stubborn layer of reddish-orange rust, the metallic structures provided her only refuge. Jamie was moving too fast for her own good. Her right foot slipped on the part of the concrete floor caked in slimy gray water, and she flew backward. A sharp, jarring impact reverberated through her body as her head collided mercilessly with the rock-hard ground, briefly enveloping her in a haze of pain and disorientation.

For a moment, Jamie thought she might have knocked herself out, but she quickly realized she was still conscious. She touched her head and felt a lump forming, but it wasn't too bad. She breathed a sigh of relief. She knew that she had to stay hidden and wait. Jamie got up and sprinted toward the plumbing carefully so as not to fall again. She grabbed the pipes and crept into a hole in the wall behind them.

The thought of death came swirling back. She thought that this was precisely where it was going to happen. That this is where she would die. Her young life was barely lived, and it would end down here, in a hospital basement that smelled of mildewy shit. That the hospital staff would find her bloated

corpse floating in the floodwater. Finally, after an eternity, Jamie heard footsteps approaching in the distance. They were getting closer and closer, and she felt her heart pumping so fast she thought that if her uncle didn't kill her, a heart attack would. She tried to slow her breathing and steady herself, but it was useless. The footsteps were almost upon her now, and Jamie knew she was running out of time. She began to pray.

A blood-curdling scream tore through Jamie's throat as she felt a hand grab at her ankle, pulling her back into the narrow pipes she had crawled into. Her heart pounding with fear, she struggled to free herself, but the hand was relentless, its grip tightening with every passing second. She could hear her ragged breathing as she realized that this was the end. She shoved the thought away and began to fight with all her might to break free. She kicked and kicked and pulled her leg as hard as she could against the grip. Finally, with one more strong pull, she managed to slip out of the vice grip hands that had grabbed her. She crawled through the pipes and into the open room. She looked up and saw the figure holding the flashlight.

It was the janitor, Gerry.

She let out a cry of triumph and relief, knowing that she was going to live and that she was running from nothing the whole time. Her mind was playing games with her again.

"Hey, there, little one. You shouldn't be down here! It's dangerous." He noticed her bleeding hand and reached down to pick her up off the grimy floor.

"And look, you've gone and hurt yourself. We better find a doctor right away!"

Janitor Gerry, a burly man with calloused hands and a kind heart, gently lifted Jamie off the ground and held her securely in his arms, and her body trembled with shock and adrenaline.

Gerry offered her a reassuring smile, and Jamie felt a sense of calm fall over her. Gerry put Jamie down and held her hand as they began to make their way up the stairs, Jamie's legs felt weak, and she stumbled a few times. "I'd hate for you to fall on my watch, kid. Come here." Gerry said to Jamie, and he picked her back up gently.

The feeling that she could have died down there in the wet darkness was now fleeting. Jamie was beginning to feel safe again.

Jamie's body relaxed as they reached the top of the stairs. She sighed a long sigh of relief, and an incredible tranquility swept over her. She nestled into Gerry's arms. She felt protected. She closed her eyes and allowed herself to drift off, knowing she was in good hands. Jamie's mind raced with thoughts of what she had just gone through as she started to lose consciousness. Was it real? Was Michael really back? Had any of today been real at all? Was it all in her head?

But amid the chaos, some hope did shine through. She realized that her voice, which had been silenced for so long, might finally be returning to her. It was a small victory, but she was happy to take even the smallest of wins today.

\* \* \*

Pale and visibly shaken, Sam Loomis gazed up at the monolithic sight of 45 Lampkin Lane. Once a pristine symbol of suburban standards, the house now stood as a haunting relic, its once vibrant white facade weathered to a sickly beige hue. The passage of time had not been kind to the dwelling; it seemed

to reflect the morbid fate that had befallen its inhabitants. Since 1963, no one had dared to call this place home. Though occasional showings had taken place throughout the years, Strode Realty and the Illinois Bank of Commerce were the only entities with any financial connection to the property. Both parties showed little interest in investing further resources into the dilapidated structure. It had become a forgotten memory. For those that did remember the horrors that had unfolded within its walls, the house stood as a reminder to lock their doors at night.

In 1978, during Michael Myers' merciless rampage through Haddonfield Memorial Hospital, the enraged teenagers of the town sought solace in their anger and grief. Their wrath turned toward the abandoned house, transforming it into a physical manifestation of their mourning. Like a collective outpouring of grief, they had vandalized the property, shattering several windows in the act of defiant rebellion against evil itself. Understanding their grief, Dr. Loomis had labeled the incident a "wake," a symbolic gathering to mourn the loss of three friends and classmates, victims of Michael's slaughter. After the outburst, new panes of glass were installed to repair the shattered windows. Yet, aside from that minimal effort, the house remained a frozen relic, untouched by the hands of progress. Houses carry memories, and the memories of this home's tragic past lingered within its decaying walls, a silent testament to the horrors that had unfolded and the darkness that still haunted its halls.

The only prospective buyer of the home came around in 1984, and that gentleman was, shall we say, not the kind of person that the locals wanted in the neighborhood. He planned to write a book that would chronicle the events of 1963 and



1978. The writer figured that the best way to write the book was in the childhood home of the psychotic serial killer he would be covering. The locals didn't want any more attention than had already come from the tragedies. So, Strode Realty politely declined the gentleman's request to purchase under a bullshit clause of eminent domain that didn't actually exist for the home. They quite simply didn't want the writer living there and making what amounted to blood money on tragedy. The writer abandoned the project after no one in town would speak with him. "No good would come of it" was the exact phrase used by most of whom he had initially approached for interviews.

Aside from the eager writer, no one wanted to live at 45 Lampkin Lane after what had happened in 1963. It was too much for most to bear, and after 1978 and its ensuing chaos, it had a sordid reputation for being haunted. Kids would gather around the house every Halloween and dare each other to go inside. No one ever actually made it in. Sam didn't necessarily think that the place was *haunted*, but he did believe that it was a frequent *haunt* by his former patient. Something about the place called to Michael, much like his mask: Sam was, for the first time since 1978, standing in front of Michael's childhood home, and if evil were anywhere on this day, it would be here.

The lawn was the most unkempt on the block. Strode Realty took their uninvolvedness seriously and never so much as hired a college kid to keep the lawn shaped up. Weeds shot out from every corner of the house, and the grass had overgrown considerably. Sam took his first steps onto the overgrown lawn and felt like he was entering a jungle. He crunched down on dead leaves and pushed overgrown brown grass and burweed out of his way. He made his way onto the porch. Sam's first

step creaked under his foot as if the wooden stoop were in pain. Sam felt that the home's four main windows were like evil eyes staring down at him as he walked nearer to the entrance. Walking nervously yet patiently towards the front door, Sam reached into his beige coat and shoulder holster and grabbed the butt of his Colt M1911. The gun heightened Sam's sense of security, but he knew in this strange reality that it would do him no good should he need to use it. The porch under his feet growled and creaked again, this time sounding more angry than pained, letting him know that it could snap at any moment and trap him under the house forever. A childish thought, to be sure, but Sam was fucking scared. He grabbed the once shiny gold (now turned a greenish patina due to decades of rust) door handle. He turned it and tried to open the door, but the deadbolt was locked. "Damn it," Sam cursed under his breath.

Sam looked around to ensure no neighbors were watching and took his Colt, swinging it hard toward the door window, which sent broken glass all over the home's foyer. He reached in, careful not to cut himself on the jagged glass, and turned the deadbolt. Sam's breathing intensified as he opened the door. It creaked open dramatically, and the bright sunlight shone through the living room to his right. Billions of dust particles were floating in the light. Every step that Sam took kicked up dust. To his left was the staircase leading up to Michael's sister's room. Sam shivered when he thought of that night in 1963 when Michael committed his first murder after walking up the stairs. Even all these years later, looking up at that staircase frightened Sam. He tried to brush off his fear and move onward, but he began to regret coming here alone. To his right was the large open living room, and further down the hall led to the kitchen, where Michael took the knife that ended Judith Myers'

life. Sam wasn't interested in those areas of the home. He assumed that Michael would have chosen a more secure hiding spot while he bided his time. In front of him was a hallway that led to the basement door.

As Sam approached the door leading to the basement, the wooden floor groaned under his weight. The house was full of creaks and groans both inside and out. Upon reaching the entrance, he gripped the handle tightly, his Colt poised, and slowly turned it. The door protested loudly as he opened it, sending a cloud of ancient dust cascading down from the lintel and settling on his bald head. Sam coughed and brushed the dirt from the top of his head, and he could feel the grit and grime between his fingers. Despite the state of the house, the sunlight outside still managed to penetrate the basement windows, which miraculously remained relatively clear despite the accumulation of filth.

As Sam descended the staircase, his heart felt like a jackhammer gone haywire inside his chest, and sweat began to form on his forehead. With his first step, his anxiety surged. On the second, he took a deep breath. With the third, he held it in, gathering his courage. He exhaled as he reached the fourth step, trying to calm himself. On the fifth step, the wood beneath his right foot gave way, causing him to lose his balance. His cane flew out of his hand and disappeared into the dark abyss of the basement. He grunted in frustration, fear, and pain as his leg dangled awkwardly below the staircase. His already weakened left leg bent in an uncomfortable position, but fortunately, it did not snap. After a few moments of clinging to the staircase and coming to terms with his situation, he managed to haul himself up and out of the hole. Shaking his head, he berated himself for not using his flashlight. Although the sunlight filtered in, the

basement remained dimly lit. It had been over two decades since anyone had bothered to use or fix the stairs, so Sam realized he probably should have been more cautious.

Getting to his feet, he brushed off the dirt clinging to his trousers and coat. At that moment, as his gaze dropped downward, overwhelming fear coursed through him. On the dusty staircase, he spotted a trail of footprints that clearly did not belong to him. Michael had indeed been present. Gripping the staircase wall for stability, Sam cautiously descended each step, moving gradually toward the bottom.

Sam noticed something on the north wall.

The same symbol that the poor girl's bones were placed in seemed to have been burned onto the concrete basement wall of Michael's home.



Sam examined the burn mark closely, confirming his suspicions. Michael Myers had been influenced by something far more sinister than his deranged psyche. After discovering two identical symbols, Dr. Sam Loomis knew precisely what he was dealing with. While he still needed to gather more evidence to prove his theory, he had a clear starting point for his investigation. If his suspicions were correct, it would explain, or at least give more credence to, the inexplicable psychic link between Michael and Jamie. However, if this was the case, there was little the Haddonfield Police Department could do. Sam knew he would have to confront Michael alone and be extremely cautious. He couldn't risk exposing his plans to anyone, even those he trusted implicitly. Sam retraced his steps up the staircase, emerging from the house to retrieve a set of essential equipment waiting in his car. He fervently prayed that he wouldn't have to employ it, yet deep down, he acknowledged the unsettling reality that it might be his sole recourse.

On his way upstairs, Sam never noticed the man in black, who was standing behind the basement staircase, watching his every move.

\* \* \*

Sam's mind became a turbulent whirlpool of unease as three pressing matters consumed his every thought. Foremost among them was Jamie, whose inner workings eluded him like elusive shadows in the night. Could he harness her mysterious visions to locate Michael? The thought of exploiting her timid and

fearful nature stirred a disquieting blend of curiosity and trepidation within him, leaving him haunted by the potential harm he might inflict upon her. Yet, desperate times called for desperate measures, and he couldn't shake the gnawing realization that employing Jamie's abilities might be the sole means of tracking down the bastard.

The second matter that plagued Sam's consciousness was the string of perplexing events that had unfolded throughout the day. Each incident, like a jigsaw puzzle piece meticulously falling into place, painted a disturbing picture that defied rationality and pushed the boundaries of his sanity. Above all, the image of the unearthed girl's skeletal remains kept haunting his mind, its persistent presence driving him to the brink of madness. The oppressive web of darkness seemed to constrict around him, trapping him in a nasty dance of inexplicable occurrences that whispered of true evil at play.

And then there was Thorn, casting its shadow over Sam's thoughts. The journey back to the hospital had been an excruciating ordeal, a torturous passage through the corridors of his apprehension. His nerves were raw, frayed like exposed wires, and his trembling hands mirrored the erratic movements of a patient afflicted with Parkinson's disease. A perverse thrill coursed through his veins. It was a nervous excitement at the prospect of unraveling the insidious roots connecting Michael's affliction to Thorn. However, this morbid fascination was smothered by a creeping fear, an unsettling awareness that Michael might not be acting alone.

Sam possessed fragments of knowledge regarding Thorn, collected from countless nights immersed in ancient tomes and texts on the occult. The whispers of history had revealed that in the darkest days of Druid times, a macabre tradition

had existed. Every few generations, a child would be chosen as the vessel for the curse of Thorn. This wicked affliction would transform the innocent into an unstoppable harbinger of death, driven by an insatiable urge to eradicate their kin. The twisted logic behind this malefic ritual dictated that through the eradication of the cursed bloodline, peace, and prosperity would be restored among the other families of the village, and the coming year's harvest would be bountiful.

A shudder coursed through Sam's weary frame as the weight of the revelation settled upon his shoulders. Haddonfield, the town that had nestled itself within the recesses of his heart, might be forever ensnared by the clutches of the same ancient force. Sam imagined shadowy figures lurking in the alleys, their faces hidden beneath cloaks of black, silently aiding and abetting Michael's descent into madness. Could some of Haddonfield's residents be part of a nefarious cult, their hands stained with the blood of the innocent? The mere thought of it sent a fresh wave of terror crashing over Sam, an icy grip squeezing his heart in a vice of despair.

His mind conjured images of the Haddonfield townsfolk, their faces contorted by secrets, their souls bound by a sadistic and violent purpose. They would form a twisted circle of guardians, veiled in darkness, shielding Michael and his deranged machinations. They would tend to his wounds, both seen and unseen, nurturing him back to health so he could continue his merciless rampage. The very idea of it caused Sam's trembling to intensify, the chill of their collaboration permeating the air around him, suffocating him in an atmosphere thick with impending doom.

Sam was left with a harrowing realization as the day descended into darkness. To unravel the enigma of Thorn, he



would have to confront not only Michael's tormented soul but also the insidious web of complicity that had possibly entangled Haddonfield itself. The stakes were higher than he had ever imagined, and the road ahead seemed perilous. Sam steeled himself, determined to pierce the veil of secrecy and expose the truth, even if it meant descending further into the abyss of darkness that threatened to consume them all.

Dr. Loomis showed up at the Haddonfield Children's Hospital while Jamie's hand was being stitched up. "I need to speak with her," Sam told the nurse in the middle of a stitch.

"Dr. Loomis, as you can see, Jamie's hand is cut open, and I am stitching her up. Can this wait?"

"No." Replied Sam bluntly. He had no time to wait. She would heal.

The nurse huffed and looked at Jamie. "I'm sorry, sweetie. It seems you are wanted elsewhere." Jamie looked nervous.

"But I need to finish this as soon as you're done, Dr. Loomis. We don't want to see her hand get infected." The nurse glared at Sam. He paid it no mind.

"Let's go, Jamie. Now" He ordered Jamie and gestured with his cane for her to leave the room.

Sam walked Jamie back to her room, cane in one hand and Jamie's arm clenched tightly in the other. His left leg fucking hurt, only setting his anger off into overdrive. It didn't help that Jamie was beginning to cry her eyes out, clearly petrified at what she had been experiencing the last twelve hours or so. Jamie had endured an unimaginable day, and night hadn't fallen yet. Sam couldn't deny the depth of her suffering. Her torment had been terrible. It must have been beyond challenging for her to deal with the midnight seizure to the relentless onslaught of hallucinations. Sam, however, knew deep down that these

experiences were more than mere illusions. There was truth in Jamie's visions, a knowledge that surpassed the boundaries of ordinary perception. His empathy for her was boundless, and he longed to alleviate the mental anguish and confusion she was enduring. Yet, this yearning to solve the riddle of Michael's psychopathy had overshadowed his empathy considerably. He needed to uncover the secrets hidden within her mind.

Sam looked at Jamie with great intensity. Jamie wasn't used to this. Doctor Sam Loomis had been her doctor and caregiver, someone she felt cared for her in a way that even her family wouldn't or couldn't. His heavily scarred face never scared her before, but it was frightening her now. She was used to a sense of warmth from him, almost grandfatherly. The way he walked with his cane made him seem feeble, like the old man he was. Here, however, he appeared strong, and he looked shockingly insane. To a nine-year-old girl, his stare was one of malice and mistrust. And then he finally spoke to her.

"Is there something you want to tell me, Jamie?" He asked coldly.

Jamie shook her head, confused.

"Perhaps you don't trust me... But you ought to, Jamie." Sam got closer to Jamie.

"We both know he's alive. But *you* know where he is!" Sam's voice was now shouting at her. Jamie began to cry.

"Jamie, please! Please help me find him! I tried looking for him today. I know he went home. That much I can be sure of. But I need to know where he is - *NOW!*"

Jamie could feel not just anger emanating from his gravelly voice but madness. "Jamie, Those visions of yours - I think we can track him down and end this nightmare. Why do you insist on protecting him?!"

Jamie began to fluster. Her mind was swarming with confusion. She knew what he wanted, but describing the indescribable seemed out of the question. Add to that the fact that Doctor Loomis was truly scaring her. In a panic, Jamie turned to her nightstand and reached for a “HELP” buzzer, and Sam ripped it out from her hand, tearing the buzzer from its power cable and throwing it across the room. Jamie jumped back in her bed to the wall, cowering her head in fright, but Doctor Loomis only made his way closer to her face.

“Don’t you remember last year? I know you do. How could you forget? How he made you stab your stepmother, Jamie? Don’t you remember?! You stabbed her! I saw you on top of the stairs, covered in her blood. But I don’t believe for a moment that it was you, Jamie. It was some part of the night, the evil of it. The evil of him... The evil of *something else*... I am begging you to help me, Jamie. You may be my only real chance of finding and stopping him.” Loomis looked crazed, and Jamie slid under her pillow, avoiding any eye contact with him.

“Very well then, Jamie. Continue to live your life in fear, giving him the victory. Without even putting up a fight!” Loomis snatched the pillow from her grip, held Jamie’s shoulders, and forcefully shook her.

“WITHOUT PUTTING UP A FIGHT!” He then released her gently, looked into her eyes, and realized how much he had frightened her. With a sigh, he began to regain his composure.

Averting his eye contact with Jamie, Loomis spoke softly, “Perhaps I have been expecting too much from you. It’s natural to feel scared. I have been fighting against this evil for twenty-six years, yet I’m still afraid. There are nights when I clamp my hands over my mouth to stop myself from screaming as I cry myself to sleep in fear. But I won’t stop fighting, Jamie.” With

that, he turned away and left the room.

## Chapter 5

As the sun slowly descended towards the horizon, painting the sky with myriad colors, Tina, Samantha, and Mikey stood outside of Evan's Liquor, eagerly waiting for Samantha's boyfriend, Spitz, to emerge from the store. Among the trio, Spitz held a unique position as the only one of legal drinking age, having crossed the threshold into *real* adulthood at twenty-one. As the first member of their group to gain exclusive lifetime access to alcohol, Spitz had attained a god-like status among his underage friends. His job at Evan's Liquor gave him the power to procure alcoholic beverages of all kinds for the minors of Haddonfield, elevating him to the number one spot in everyone at Haddonfield High's phone book.

The recent change in the drinking age, which had been raised to twenty-one just a year ago, had left many high school seniors disheartened. However, Spitz's ability to fulfill their alcohol-related needs had become a source of *immense* pleasure for him, fueling his ego on a daily basis. Despite this, neither his boss, Evan Lincoln, nor the police had caught on to his lucrative illegal activities. Thus, Spitz continued to relish his newfound fame, basking in the admiration of his younger peers.

Mikey's impatience was palpable as he grumbled, "What the

fuck is taking him so long?” His sour mood was evident to everyone present.

Tina shrugged casually, a hint of indifference in her gesture. She reached into her purse and retrieved a cigarette and lighter, neatly tucked away among her belongings. She lit it, the flame of the lighter illuminating her face briefly. As she took a long drag, a cloud of smoke gracefully escaped her lips, dissipating into the air around her. Samantha, who didn't smoke, pretended to cough. “You know those things will kill you.” She said.

Tina laughed and replied, “You sound like my father.”

Mikey grunted again. Tina looked over at him and smiled. “Don't worry, babe. He's probably just closing up. It's almost six o'clock now.”

“Yeah, well, I'm gettin' thirsty, and we've gotta hit Tower farm at eight.” Replied Mikey.

“Cool your jets, you ogre! You are always such a fucking grouch. Which is why I got you this!” Tina pulled a small shopping bag from her purse and took out an ugly troll mask. It was flesh-colored, with green goo dripping down from its mouth, a huge nose, several boils and pimples, gray hair, and a stern expression.

Mikey wasn't pleased. “See?” said Tina, “It suits you! Hahaha!” She cackled.

Mikey took the mask and threw it down in the back seat of the Camaro. Tina looked back at Samantha, holding back a giggle. “I guess Mikey doesn't like it.”

Tina and Samantha laughed, but Samantha quickly put her nervous face back on. Samantha wasn't enthused with her boyfriend's side hustle as the booze man for underage kids. It was fine as long as it was for his friends, but he did it for *everyone*. She figured one day he'd get caught, and they'd send him on up

to the Illinois State Penitentiary for a few years, and there goes Mrs. Frank Spielman (if anyone but her called Spitz by his real name, they usually got a punch to the face). Spitz and Mikey could be hot-tempered, but Mikey was more irrational. "Well, I just hope that he doesn't get caught." Said Samantha.

"Sam, Spitz is a pro, don't worry." Replied Tina.

At that moment, the crash of the liquor store front doors opening startled the girls, and Spitz came spilling out, blood pouring from his mouth and holding his hands over his stomach.

"AHHHH!!!" Spitz screamed.

Samantha started screaming and running towards Spitz, who began laughing hysterically. Spitz pulled an empty faux blood packet out of his mouth and gave Samantha a messy red kiss. She pulled away instantly and smacked his face with a mighty WHHACCKK.

"Ouch, babe, what's the trouble?" Spitz asked.

"What's the trouble? What's the fucking trouble?! *You*, asshole. First, you're late getting out here, and secondly, if you ever pull another stupid fucking stunt like that, I'll have you shot."

Samantha looked towards Mikey. "Mikey, you've got a gun, right?"

Mikey pulled down his sunglasses to reveal his eyes, looked at Spitz, and said, "Indeed I do, and I know how to use it."

Spitz noticed the sheen on Mikey's '67 Camaro. Sliding his faux blood-tinted fingers over the hood, he said, "Mikey, Mikey, Mikey! Beautiful wax job on this. How long did it ta..." Spitz was cut off when Mikey seemingly flew out of his seat and grabbed Spitz's jaw, pulling him in close.

"TOUCH THE CAR... and you're dead," Mikey said.

Spitz smiled through the jaw grab and said, "Touchy, touchy,

Mikey. Pull the car 'round back, and I'll load up the trunk."

Spitz blew a kiss at Samantha and made his way back into the shop.

"Tina, I'll pick you up in an hour. Sam, I'll see you at the party." Said Mikey.

Tina and Samantha exited the car and started walking down the street to Tina's apartment. Mikey wheeled the Camaro around the alleyway to the loading door of Evan's Liquor.

\* \* \*

"You want us to do what?!" Sheriff Meeker exclaimed, unable to believe what Sam wanted him to do.

After Sam's uncomfortable and fruitless conversation with Jamie earlier, Sam needed to figure out the next move. On his drive to the Haddonfield Police Station, he had thought up more than his fair share of insane ideas, and the one they were discussing was one of the less crazy ones. It still wasn't a leisurely chat. Trying to convince a Sheriff of what seemed to be one hell of a lot of city resources to catch someone everyone in town knows to be dead already was ridiculous.

"It may not even have to happen like I'm saying, Sheriff. But we need a plan of some sort, and I think this is the best course of action." Sam rubbed his eyes; as the day passed, he was getting tired.

"Jesus, Sam. It's a residential neighborhood. And you want men with machine guns stationed around that decrepit old place in hopes that he shows up. You want fog lights, which, by the way, will light up the whole block, Sam. We're going to get so many god damn complaints... You really want me to do this? Because I really want to tell you to get the fuck off of my lawn."



As Sam pondered Sheriff Meeker's concerns, he realized they were not entirely unfounded. Undeniably, their plan would stir up trouble within the neighborhood, but he couldn't afford to think about that now. Perhaps, in some miraculous turn of events, it wouldn't even come to that. But deep down, Sam knew he was deceiving himself. This was precisely the location where it needed to go down. However, he knew it wouldn't happen as Sheriff Meeker imagined. Sam had something very different in mind for the Sheriff's department, and Sam's plan would work. It *had* to work. He was going to trap the son of a bitch. Every detail had been meticulously planned out (in Sam's head, anyway). Inside, Sam wasn't exactly sure any of this would work, no matter how much planning there was. But it was the only way he could think of to end this once and for all. Despite the inevitable backlash from the community, Sam needed to take this chance and end the terror that had plagued himself, Jamie, and Haddonfield for far too long.

\* \* \*

Mikey's Camaro flew down the alleyway behind Evan's Liquor, his tires spinning wildly—thick black smoke billowed from the shiny wheels, choking the air behind the car. Then hitting the brakes, the machine created an ear-piercingly loud screech and howled as it came to a stop, leaving behind deep black tread marks in its wake. Mikey's real and only love outside of himself was his Camaro. To him, Tina was nothing more than a piece of set decoration. Spitz stood at the loading zone attached to the liquor store, playing a balancing act with three cases of

Budweiser. "What the hell do you think you're doing, Mikey? You realize you're about to be transporting several cases of beer in that thing, right? Some of that beer is in glass bottles, by the way. I want to make sure my loyal customers get what they've paid for!" Spitz was clearly pissed, but then again, he'd been successfully supplying booze to underage patrons for some time now and hadn't gotten caught *yet*.

"Oh, shut the *fuck* up, Spitz. This isn't some closely guarded secret," replied Mikey.

"Yea, yea. Sure. But *I'm* the one taking all the risk. If *you* get caught, I will go to jail. You, on the very fortunate other hand, will get a slap on the wrist." Said Spitz. "Now, come and help me out."

The two boys got to work. All in all, they loaded ten cases of beer, a case of vodka, one of Jack Daniels, and ten cartons of Marlboro Reds. The Tower farm parties usually lasted anywhere between two and three days and always started on Halloween night. People would come and go over the long weekend. Some people even took the day off to show up at eight in the morning to start partying. It was the single most popular event for teenagers and young adults throughout the year - every year. Legend had it these parties began when the Tower family lived there, and everyone knew that the Towers were an odd bunch. Rumor had it that the parties may have been some weird, ancient way to praise the gods for a good harvest season. It had been an abandoned field, farmhouse, and barn for the last fifty or so years. The Towers disappeared in the '30s, and no one was sure where they went. The festivities, however, didn't leave with them.

The kids in Haddonfield didn't give a shit about harvesting, but they did care a great deal about getting royally fucked up. So

the new tradition began: sex, drugs, and rock and roll. At some point in the mid-sixties, the farm was acquired by a Chicago realty group that sold it to Strode Realty in Haddonfield. Shortly after Strode's acquisition, a hippie commune from San Francisco moved to the Tower farm. As old-fashioned as the Haddonfield residents were, the commune didn't bother the locals. In fact, they were a huge partner in the local economy as there were about sixty or so new people in the area, and they all had money to burn (how it was they got their money, no one asked). So, they stayed. Some high school students found their way into the commune, told their friends the hippies had pot, and by the following October, the first Halloween Tower farm party in a quarter of a century was held. The problem was no one knew when to go home, and the first few parties lasted almost a week. The hippies were long gone by the mid-eighties, but the parties kept happening.

Mikey slammed the trunk of his Camaro, which was now holding one hell of a lot of contraband. "I'll see you out there later tonight. Don't be late." Said Mikey.

"See you there," Agreed Spitz.

Mikey gave his hair a quick once-over using the driver's side door mirror before leaving. Bending his head slightly, he fixed his gaze upon his hair's reflection, a self-satisfied smile curling on his lips. "Perfect," he muttered, content with the flawlessly styled locks that adorned his head. In truth, Mikey found pleasure in most aspects of himself. He reveled in his status as a workout enthusiast, dedicating countless hours to sculpting his lean physique. A fervent consumer of all things trendy, he never missed an opportunity to acquire the latest items that caught his eye. Maintaining his physical appearance was paramount to Mikey; it was integral to his identity. He took

pride in his well-groomed image and mocked those who didn't meet his standards. For Mikey, self-adoration and narcissism were familiar bedfellows.

He got up from his hair worship and grabbed the car door handle to let himself in when he heard a loud bang. It startled him. He wasn't used to being startled. A nails-on-chalkboard screeching noise then followed this bang. It was the sound of metal being scratched. In the car mirror, Mikey could see someone using a garden claw to grind deep cuts into the glossy black paint of his car. A three-prong garden claw. On his beloved Camaro. Oh, boy, the motherfucker was going to pay *dearly* for this! Mikey turned to look to his right and saw a tall man wearing a mask, using the claw to eat away at the newly waxed black exterior with the claw.

"Okay, asshole. You wanna play?!" Yelled Mikey.

Mickey pulled a switchblade from his leather jacket pocket, and the metallic click and snap of the blade locking into place rang out in the night air. He relished the sound of the blade as he flicked it open, the sharp steel glinting in the dim light of the street lamps. He had never been one to avoid a fight, and tonight was no exception. The guy who had scratched up his beloved car would pay, one way or another. With fierce intensity, Mickey began striding towards the perpetrator, knife at the ready. He raised the blade, the tip glinting menacingly, and prepared to strike. "Trick, or TRE..."

Before he could finish his one-liner, the tall figure stepped out from behind the car and grabbed Mickey by the throat, lifting him off the ground with effortless ease.

Mickey struggled to break free, flailing wildly with his blade, but the masked figure remained unfazed. This was no ordinary opponent; this was someone who had clearly seen their fair

share of combat. Panic began to set in as Mickey realized that he was completely outmatched. Mickey's mind began to race as the masked man continued to hold him in his iron grip. This couldn't be happening to him - not to Mickey, the tough guy who had always been in control. He had always been the one doing the beating, goddammit, not the other way around. But then, with a sudden, sickening crunch, the masked man grabbed and twisted Mickey's wrist at an impossible angle, breaking every bone with a deafening crack. The pain was excruciating, shooting through Mickey's body like a lightning bolt. He had never experienced anything like it. Mickey recalled his childhood as he lay on the gravel, screaming and writhing in agony. His father, a violent drunk, had beaten him mercilessly night after night, leaving him bruised and broken. He had always promised himself that he would never be the victim again, but now, that promise had been shattered.

The assailant walked over to Mikey, placing Mikey between his legs. Mikey had no idea what to do; he wasn't ready to die, but he didn't see any way out of his situation. He lifted his legs and kicked at the madman's stomach and chest. Mikey heard the masked man's rib break on the third kick. The fucking psycho paid it no mind. Mikey didn't see that the masked man had picked back up his three-prong garden claw before coming close. Mikey turned around on the ground, attempting to crawl away from his attacker with everything he had left. Before he got as much as three feet away, the psycho killer grabbed him by the rib cage and turned him around. Mikey looked into the black eyes of the man about to kill him. For a brief moment, he didn't see a man. He saw a rabid animal. The masked man lifted the garden prong into the air. Mikey closed his eyes and resigned himself.

Michael Myers brought the three prongs down on Mikey's forehead, brutally cracking his skull, which split open like a watermelon, spilling blood all over the alleyway's gravel and creating a kind of sickening mud. Mikey hit the floor with a vibrational thud, more blood gushing from his head as he began to convulse. The Shape coldly extracted the garden prong from the lifeless body of his latest victim. The twisted implement had left a grotesque wound, tearing through brain matter and skull fragments. Unsatisfied with his work, The Shape callously drove the prong back into Mikey's head with a sickening wet thud. The violent convulsions that once wracked Mikey's body abruptly ended, leaving him motionless.

The Shape grabbed the corpse by the hands, dragged his victim near the back of the car, pulled the claw out of Mikey's head, and threw it to the ground. He saw that he was still faintly breathing. This wouldn't stand. The Shape pulled out a huge kitchen knife from the back of his workman's outfit. The last thing Mikey registered was a silver blade. In one swift and merciless motion, The Shape drove the knife deep into Mikey's left temple, severing his life permanently.

The Shape popped open the trunk of the sleek Camaro, revealing its dark void. He grabbed hold of Mikey's lifeless body and callously tossed it into the cold confines of the trunk. Michael slammed the trunk door shut. The heavy metal clanked with a deafening boom as it sealed away the young man's fate. Stepping around to the front of the vehicle, he slid into the driver's seat, settling himself behind the wheel. In a calculated move, he removed his mask and carefully placed it in the Camaro's glove box. The dim interior of the car concealed his true face. Intriguingly, an unfamiliar ogre mask had been left on the backseat. Michael placed the ogre mask over his

head, started the car, and began driving into the night.

\* \* \*

Sam Loomis sped down the road, breaking the speed limit with his car's accelerator floored to the max. The Haddonfield Children's Hospital was his destination, and he had to get there fast. Twice now, he had seen the mark of Thorn, and coupled with Jamie's visions, he had reached the stunning revelation that Jamie had an extraordinary ability to see through Michael's eyes and to observe what he observed. This meant that Jamie was the key to ending Michael's madness and ending his vicious cycle of violence. Sam's forehead was soaked with sweat, his heart thumping wildly in his chest as if it would burst out any moment as the profound realization of the immense gravity of his discovery seized hold of him. Despite all that, he had to remain calm and not let Jamie sense his unease, for that would only terrify her further, and that was the last thing either of them needed.

The clock on the wall showed that it was already past seven-thirty, and the Halloween pageant dance, an event eagerly anticipated by the young patients, was on the verge of starting. The hospital entrance had transformed into a vibrant tapestry of orange and black balloons, lending an air of festive anticipation to the atmosphere. As Sam made his way through the lively corridor, the sound of "Monster Mash" played through the halls, emanating from the rented P.A. system. He swiftly navigated through the maze of corridors, each filled with the hum of activity and the occasional excited chatter of young

patients dressed in their Halloween costumes. The staircase to the hospital's bedrooms seemed longer than usual, and Sam wished for a miracle to heal his leg. The constant limp and cane made him feel vulnerable and slowed him down, causing him excruciating pain. Finally, he made his way up the stairs and down the hall. Finally, reaching Jamie's room, Sam prepared himself for the conversation he was about to have.

Sam caught a glimpse of Jamie as he pushed open the door, and her beauty struck him. Her natural elegance shone, even through all of the makeup and glitter. Despite the events of the last few days, Jamie remained calm and collected, which gave Sam hope that they could make it through this ordeal. She was adorned in a pink princess costume embellished with ribbons and sparkling plastic. She meticulously applied blush to her already pinkish-red cheeks, enhancing her pale complexion. Her brunette curls were sprinkled with glitter, adding an extra dash of shimmer. The carefully applied mascara emphasized her deep brown eyes. Sam recalled Tina's earlier warning that Billy might have to fend off other boys tonight. Sam stepped closer to Jamie. He knew that an apology was the best approach.

"Jamie," Sam began gently, "I want to apologize for my behavior earlier this afternoon. I didn't mean to raise my voice at you. Please understand that I am just as frightened as you are."

As Jamie turned around in her vanity chair, Sam saw relief in her eyes. She touched Sam's arm and pulled him in for a hug. As they embraced, she mouthed, "It's okay," before pulling away.

"Please, Jamie, sit down for a moment on the bed," Sam requested, motioning her towards the bed.

Once she had sat down, Sam pulled out a piece of paper from his coat pocket and carefully unraveled it to reveal the mark of



Thorn. "Have you seen this mark before?" he asked, holding it up for Jamie.

Upon seeing the mark, Jamie stood up abruptly, causing Sam to step back. She ran around him and bumped into the vanity table, clearly terrified. After a moment, she grabbed a scrap of paper and wrote: "I only have seen it in my dreams. I think it means death."

Shaking, Jamie sat back down, still visibly shaken by the sight of the mark.

"Thank you, Jamie. I should provide some context regarding this mark. It's known as Thorn, an ancient mark that represents a curse. I won't burden you with all the intricate details, my love. I believe it's connected to everything that has been unfolding. I also believe your visions, which I mentioned earlier, directly link to your uncle, the Boogeyman. I understand how frightening they are and that you may be frightened and may not want to help or even believe what I'm saying. That you'd rather pretend none of this is happening. However, if you can tap into these visions, we may have a chance to locate and end this.

Jamie turned away from Sam. She wrote down on the paper: *Not yet. Please. Too scared. Leave me alone.*

With a solemn expression, Sam nodded his head in understanding, but his eyes reflected severe concern. Slowly, he took deliberate steps towards the door, his hand reaching out to grasp the doorknob. As he turned it, the hinges creaked softly, announcing his departure. Pushing the door open, he stepped onto the threshold, his right foot cautiously crossing the boundary between safety and complete uncertainty. Before fully closing the door behind him, Sam turned to face Jamie, his voice laced with earnestness. "I understand your wish not to

involve yourself further. But I wish you would help me, Jamie. I'll be waiting for you when you're ready. I hope it's not too late. It wasn't just the girl at the cemetery today, Jamie. They've found a body out by the river. All signs point to him."

With those heavy words lingering in the air, Sam finally stepped outside, his figure slowly fading into the shadows beyond the threshold. Meanwhile, Jamie, overcome by a series of extreme emotions, could no longer contain her tears. Grief and fear intertwined, and she began to weep in the empty room.

\* \* \*

As the sun sank below the horizon, the night enveloped Haddonfield in a shroud of darkness. Tina, who was only a mile away from the site of her boyfriend's murder, meticulously applied the final touches of makeup to her already stunning visage. She took great care not to smear the intricate details she had spent hours perfecting. Her heart raced excitedly as she gazed at her reflection in the vanity mirror. The vampire costume she had chosen for the evening was stunning, and she looked like a creature of the night straight out of Bram Stoker's classic novel. The black silk pantyhose with bat wing lining hugged her legs in all the right places, drawing the eye upwards to her matching black corset. The corset accentuated her curves and gave her a tantalizingly seductive air. Finally, she donned a black cape with the signature Dracula red interior, adding a touch of drama to the outfit.

As she looked in the mirror, Tina realized that her costume was missing one crucial element - thick, dripping blood. She grabbed the vial she picked up from Vincent Drugs the previous

week from the vanity and carefully applied a small amount to each corner of her mouth. She didn't want to overdo it, but she knew the fake blood would complete her look and make her appear an even more convincing vampire. She had consciously decided not to wear artificial teeth with her costume. She wanted to be able to speak with at least *some* ease and eloquence throughout the night.

Tina heard the sound of a car honking and darted toward the window of her small apartment. Looking down, she saw Mikey's Camaro idling outside her building with its engine purring. Filled with excitement, she quickly slipped on her black high heels and rushed to the front door, locking it behind her. As she descended the stairs, she lost her footing and stumbled precariously on one of her heels, almost tumbling down the steps. She made it to the entrance of her apartment building, where she saw Mikey waiting for her in the car's driver's seat. For a brief moment, she paused, gathering herself before beginning a seductive walk toward the Camaro. The lights illuminated her every move as she approached the vehicle, casting a mesmerizing glow upon her figure. Tina started to sway sensually, teasing her boyfriend with a slow, sultry strip tease in front of the Camaro. She reached up to her face, using her teeth to remove her black gloves with a seductive twist. Her movements were fluid and graceful as she teased and tantalized Mikey with her every move.

*The Shape didn't care.*

*The Shape needed her alive for just a while longer; then, he would snuff her out just like the rest. She was only as vital as she needed to be.*

Tina giggled, put on her glove, ran to the passenger side door, and tried to open it. It was locked. She pulled a few times to

no avail. "Come on, Mikey! Open up the door. It's freezing out here!" She exclaimed. It was indeed beginning to get chilly. A cold breeze had cruelly replaced the promise of unseasonably warm weather, and she could start to see her breath in the air. Mikey moved his left hand from the steering wheel to the automatic door lock. He pushed the button, and Tina opened the door and got in the car. She looked at him and saw that he had the troll mask on. "Oh, Mikey, you *do* like it! Maybe you aren't a mean ol' ogre after all. I can't resist your new look!" She slid over to kiss the mask. The thing in the mask turned its head slowly to look at her.

"Ugh, maybe I made a mistake. That mask feels creepy. Come on, Mike, don't I even get a proper kiss?" she asked, and he just stared at her for a very uncomfortable few seconds.

"Great. Just great. The old silent treatment, huh? What the fuck did I do this time, huh, Mike? Great. Hey, Mike, what's the sound of one hand clapping?" Tina waved one hand through the air to prove her point.

"Nothing. That's the sound. You know, arguing with you is a real pleasure. Amazing – absolutely amazing."

Mikey put the car in drive and began to head through town. Tina stared out of the window, almost ready to cry. Sure, he hadn't been the best boyfriend *or* lover she had ever had, but at least he never beat her up or treated her like total trash. He never crossed the line into being abusive, although he could be an asshole once in a while (okay, more than just once in a while). The only thing she truly hated about him was that no matter how hard she tried to get his attention, the fucking car would always mean more to him. And tonight proved that this relationship wouldn't last much longer.

Tina saw a liquor store approaching. Tina felt relieved. She

needed to get out of this car, at least for a moment. Tina may have punched Mikey's lights out if she didn't.

"Stop here. I want a pack of cigarettes." Tina said.

The Camaro picked up speed and flew past the liquor store. Now Tina was properly pissed. Deep down, she was *terrified*.

"I SAID STOP THE GODDAMN CAR, MICHAEL. I WANT A PACK OF CIGARETTES!" Tina screamed at the man in the mask.

The screech of the car's tires pierced through the air as it suddenly jerked to an abrupt halt. Tina felt the force push her body forward, but luckily, she was unharmed. However, the commotion didn't end there. The sleek, black Camaro hastily reversed and plowed into the liquor store parking lot they had just passed. The force of the car reversing quickly tugged at Tina's neck and gave her whiplash. The car stopped. Feeling rattled and alarmed, Tina promptly unbuckled her seat belt and made her way out of the car. "Asshole!" Tina exclaimed in frustration as she slammed the car door shut.

\* \* \*

Jamie teetered on the precipice of an emotional abyss, her mind stretching to the brink of irreparable damage. The scars of the past year's horrors etched deeply into her psyche, leaving her mentally exhausted and vulnerable. But now, this new torment had emerged to plague her existence. The horrific visions seemed to materialize without warning. Each haunting apparition intensified her sense of being trapped in a never-ending nightmare. She'd seen two murders now. Two faceless

people have died in front of her. She was unsure of how much more she could take. Though she desperately wanted to refocus herself on the dance, Jamie's thoughts refused to let go of the figure at the core of all of this. Her uncle. The boogeyman. His presence loomed over her thoughts like a ghostly shadow, persistently disrupting her attempts to find peace within her mind.

Doctor Loomis wasn't wrong, she could help him, and she knew it. But in her reality, Doctor Loomis was becoming quickly and suddenly insane. Maybe it was up to her and her alone now. But how? But when? And why her?

Someone began knocking on Jamie's room door, and then the door handle began to turn. This would have frightened her a year ago, but since her voice was lost, she became used to people knocking on the door and opening it. It wasn't as if she could shout aloud, "Come on in!"

It was Billy. Billy, who she, deep inside herself, loved, cared for, and wanted nothing but to be with. She needed him right now. "H...Hey, J...J...Jamie!" He exclaimed, probably louder than he would have wanted to sound.

Jamie waved to him. "The D...D...Dance is about to st...t...tart. W...W...Waaa..nnt to j...o...oin me?" Jamie thought he was stuttering worse than he had before, making her love him all the more.

Jamie rose from her bed, glancing at her reflection in the mirror. She made a subtle adjustment to her hair, an unconscious gesture to present herself in the best light possible. Turning back towards Billy, she stepped forward, reaching to clasp his hands. The words spilled from her lips, quiet but audible, shocking Billy.

"Let's go," she said.

Jamie and Billy were twirling beneath the kaleidoscopic lights of the disco ball at the Children's Hospital gymnasium. A myriad of other pairs joined them on the dance floor, adorned in an array of costumes - witches, wizards, werewolves, zombies, and all manner of imaginative characters. Nazareth's "Love Hurts" boomed from the loudspeaker, setting the pace for their swaying bodies. Jamie felt genuinely happy for the first time in a long time; her past year's hardships dissipated under the shimmering lights. Billy appeared positively elated at the prospect of being in such close proximity to Jamie, and their grins stretched from ear to ear. Jamie thought Billy was the most adorable boy she'd ever seen, particularly in his pirate costume with the signature eye patch. Together, they moved with elegance and eased over the dance floor, the vibrant hues of the lights guiding their steps. Finally, the memories of her uncle, Doctor Loomis, and the day's earlier events began to fade away as they danced in each other's arms.

"I...I...I realllllly l...l...like this, Jamie. You, too." Billy confessed.

Jamie pulled Billy in closer and kissed him on the cheek. Billy blushed and giggled. "W...w...woow. That's nev...ver happ... happened to me b...b...before!" Exclaimed Billy.

Jamie beamed, and they continued to sway to the beat. She marveled at how happy she felt, unable to fathom that such joy was possible after the turmoil she had endured. If this moment persisted, she dared to believe she could begin speaking again. Anything felt achievable now, like she could even take flight if desired. As the music dwindled, Jamie wrapped her arms

around Billy, pulling him into a tight embrace, while Dance Lance, the MC for the evening, took to the loudspeaker.

“AND THE WINNERS AREEEEEEE INNNNNNNN!!!!” He shouted.

Dance Lance was about to reveal the King & Queen of the Haddonfield Children’s Hospital annual Halloween Dance. Jamie and Billy looked at each other with anticipation. They were both, in their estimation, the best dressed in the room. Jamie was pleased (well, not just pleased but flat-out elated) with the present that Rachel and Tina brought her earlier that morning, which looked amazing. Billy was also quite proud of his costume. He had visited the local thrift shop with some of the other residential kids at the hospital a week before picking out their costumes for tonight’s event. He gathered several individual pieces and put the pirate costume together himself. One thing about it bothered him, though—the eye patch. Billy had begun having nightmares about whose eye his eye patch had rested on before his. Was it a killer? A crazy person? A diseased person? His nightmares got so frequent over the last week that he almost decided against the thing, but the eye patch stayed because it tied the whole outfit together.

“LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, BOILS AND GHOULS...” Dance Lance began, “...THE KING KING AND QUEEN OF THE FIFTH ANNUAL HADDONFIELD CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL HALLOWEEN DANCE ARE... JAMIE LLOYD AND BILLY HILL!!!”

The room filled with thunderous applause and exuberant cheers as the two winners were announced. Jamie and Billy exchanged looks of astonishment and joy. “W...W...W...eeee... W..” Billy was stuttering like mad and couldn’t form his sentence whatsoever at this point.



“WE WON!” Jamie exclaimed. She finally got there. She arrived. She’s done it. She spoke. Loudly. The room seemed to vibrate with the power of her voice as if the walls themselves rejoiced in her triumph.

Billy gazed at Jamie in awe, astonished by the sound of her voice. He had never heard her speak, let alone at such a high volume. The announcement of their victory had unleashed a powerful surge of energy within Jamie, and she reveled in the exhilarating feeling coursing through her veins. Eager to collect their trophy, Billy clasped Jamie’s hand and led her through the sea of costumed children, weaving their way up the grand staircase. Jamie’s heart thudded against her chest as they made their ascent, and each step felt increasingly arduous. Suddenly, unease washed over her heavily, signaling something was amiss. She felt detached from her surroundings and realized she was on the brink of a vision.

She began to surrender to it.

An icy tingle prickled Jamie’s feet, slowly climbing through her body like a creeping chill until it consumed her entire being. As the sensation intensified, her head became filled with a rush of frigid energy, overwhelming her senses. Billy regarded her with concern, but Jamie was beyond his reach now. The vision engulfed her, and she found herself transported into his eyes.

“J...J...aaamiiee? Are yo..u..u ok...ay?!”

Jamie clutched the staircase railing, her vision splitting between the crowd below and Tina, riding in a car that was going really, really fast. Fear and anger etched on Tina’s face, while in her peripheral vision, Jamie saw a pair of hands on the steering wheel. Suddenly, a veil of darkness crept over her eyes, and Jamie collapsed to the ground, seizing uncontrollably. As Jamie convulsed, Doctor Loomis and Deputies Ross and Farrah

fought through the panicked crowd, making their way up the stairs. Doctor Loomis knelt by Jamie's side, gently coaxing her from her seizure.

"What do you see, Jamie? What do you see?" Sam asked.

Jamie thrashed her head back and forth on the ground, trying to regain her sight. She wanted this to stop. Now. Her head ached horribly, throbbing with pain. Billy wept at her side, powerless to help. "Jamie, focus. Tell us what you see," Sam's calm voice urged her.

"T...T...TINAAAA!" Jamie shouted, finally finding her voice.

"Tina? What about Tina? Where is she?" Sam asked.

"Sttttoore? Co...oo..kiee," Jamie replied.

Sam was puzzled, but he knew that Jamie's visions came in fragments, making it difficult for her to articulate them. He remained patient, knowing that, eventually, the pieces would fall into place. "Cookie store? Is that it, Jamie?" Sam asked.

Jamie violently shook her head in frustration. "NOOOOOO!" She shouted.

"Cooookieeee.... Woo.o..o..mmann!" Jamie said.

"Cookie woman?" Sam scanned the area and noticed Deputy Farrah holding Billy and attempting to console him. Beside Farrah stood Deputy Ross, seemingly unaware and lost in thought. "Don't just stand there, Ross," Loomis bellowed at him, "get Meeker on the line! Now, damn you!" Deputy Ross sprang into action, quickly grabbing the radio to contact Sheriff Meeker.

Jamie felt her grip on the vision slipping away once more.

"Tinnna leeof... lefffttt the c.c.c..car! Shh.hheee's go...go... going in the st.stt.store!" She said.

"Dammit," Sam began, "Deputies, do you know where she could be? Something about cookies? Or a woman? It's a store,

I think, is what she said.”

The two deputies exchanged a glance before realization dawned on them.

“Bill’s gas station! Fifth and Main!” Said Deputy Ross, excited to finally figure out a clue.

Deputy Farrah released Billy, and he ran away from the scene. He quickly picked up his radio and tuned to the emergency all-band line. He spoke urgently into the device, “All officers and patrol, we need your immediate assistance at Bill’s Gas on Fifth and Main. We need to locate Tina Williams and transport her to the Haddonfield Children’s Hospital as soon as possible. Ms. Williams is in grave danger, and the suspect is considered armed and extremely dangerous.” Deputy Farrah lowered the radio, turned, and whispered to Sam for clarification. “Should I tell them who?”

Sam shook his head. “No...” He said.

Farrah brought the radio back up, “Suspect unknown. Over.”

\* \* \*

Tina was royally pissed off. She stormed into Bill’s gas station. The harsh fluorescent lights blinded her momentarily as the automatic double doors opened. She wiped away frustrated tears, thinking they were probably ruining her makeup. With no particular aisle in mind, Tina started walking down the store’s narrow lanes, trying to calm down and think rationally. She had always known Mikey was an asshole, but this was different. Something was off. Did he feel... bigger? He smelled different too. Was it even Mikey? Tina shook her head to

clear her thoughts, but the unsettling feeling persisted. The man driving the car she had been in didn't talk or act like her boyfriend. Hell, he didn't talk at all.

She stared blankly at some candy on the shelf, lost in thought. Suddenly, a gentle hand landed softly on Tina's shoulder, breaking the concentration she had in her thoughts. Startled by the unexpected contact, she jolted with a sudden jerk, her body instinctively reacting to the sensation. Caught off guard, Tina stumbled backward, her unsteady footsteps colliding with the candy shelves. She stumbled backward, knocking over rows of candy that tumbled to the floor in a sweet avalanche.

"JESUS FUCKING CHRIST!" She shouted.

Heart racing, Tina turned to face her assailant, only to find a middle-aged employee with a friendly face and a 'Hello, my name is Jerry' name-tag standing before her. "I'm sorry, miss... but you look troubled. Is everything okay?" Name-Tag Jerry asked.

Tina couldn't help it. She fell to her knees and began to weep. Name-Tag Jerry helped her and held her close as siren sounds were getting closer and closer. Jerry walked Tina to the door. Upon reaching the doorway, Tina's gaze fell upon Mikey's Camaro parked just outside. However, her heart skipped a beat when there seemed to be a different face in the driver's seat. A white, pale face. Fear gripped her, intensifying her already electric nerves. The hair on the back of her neck stood on end, a visceral warning that echoed the gravity of her situation, as if whispering, "You could've died in there."

Within moments, the scene was inundated with the arrival of not one but five police cruisers. Their cruiser doors swung open, and a flurry of officers emerged, their eyes focused, weapons firmly gripped. One said, "Tina Williams? Tina

Williams, is that you?"

"YES! What the hell is going on?!" Tina shouted.

An officer approached Tina and said, "I'm sorry to intrude on your evening, miss, but a Doctor Sam Loomis, I'm assuming you know him?" Tina nodded.

"Well, miss, he's asked if you would accompany us to the Haddonfield Children's Clinic."

Tina looked distant, removed. "Jamie..." She whispered.

Tina began to walk with the officer to the police cruiser but looked toward the Camaro and said to the officer, "Okay. Let me go tell my boyfriend what's going on."

With the pale-faced man in the driver's seat, the Camaro started the car up and drove away so fast that the tires smoked as they skidded on the road. Tina felt an intense chill all over her body. She turned back to the police cruiser and got into the back seat, slamming the door when she got in. Tina's mind was a blank canvas; all she could think about was Jamie and Rachel. She thought quietly to herself as she looked out of the window...

*Jamie... Please tell me you're okay.*

\* \* \*

"She's on her way." Deputy Farrah said to an extremely overwhelmed Doctor Loomis.

"Thank God for that," Sam replied.

As Jamie waited for Tina's arrival, she began to feel the weight of the minutes ticking by. Each second felt like an eternity as

she anxiously awaited news about Tina's situation. Her mind wandered, replaying the events of the day over and over again.

Tina had always been there for Jamie. Next to Rachel, she was the closest thing Jamie had to a sister. After the fallout of 1988, Tina had been a steady presence in Jamie's life. She never judged Jamie for what had happened or questioned her actions or motives. Instead, she had been there for Jamie, offering her support and comfort in any way she could. As Jamie thought about Tina's support over the last year, she compared it to Rachel's absence over the course of the day. Rachel had her issues to work through, and Jamie understood that. But of all the days, she chose *this* one not to be with Jamie. Sometimes it was hard not to feel like she was alone in the world, with no one to turn to. At seven years old, Jamie was still learning how to navigate the complexities of relationships and the intricacies of social dynamics. Understanding older girls' priorities wasn't exactly in her wheelhouse yet.

The day had been taking its heavy toll on Jamie. Each passing minute felt more intense than the last, and she struggled to focus her thoughts. She fidgeted with her hands, picking at her fingernails absentmindedly. Her mind raced, trying to make sense of everything that had happened. Finally, she saw the flashing lights of a police car coming in through the hospital windows. Relief flooded her, and she stood up to get a better look. As the police cruiser pulled into the hospital's parking ramp, she saw Tina in the backseat. Her relief was almost overwhelming, and tears welled in her eyes.

Jamie almost burst into a fit of tears when she saw Tina come through the front doors of the Children's Hospital. "TINA!!!" Jamie yelled from the foyer.

"Baby!" Tina said. A lump in her throat began to form.

Jamie and Tina embraced, and Tina hugged her for as long as she could. She pulled Jamie away from the hug and looked her in the eyes, deeply concerned. "Now, what's going on?" She asked.

"Michael Myers." Said the instantly recognizable gravel of Doctor Sam Loomis.

Tina turned around to see Sam standing, leaning on his cane. "Despite our best efforts last Halloween, he has come home again. To kill."

"Oh, bullshit, Sam!" Tina turned to look at Jamie, "Oh, I'm sorry, honey. I need to talk with your whacko doctor for a minute."

"Come with me," said Sam, and he led them both out of the foyer and into the now-empty dance floor of the hospital. Sam looked grave.

Tina looked at Sam with serious eyes. The kind that normally shut most men up and said, "Doctor Loomis, you need to stop filling that precious girl's head with all of this Michael Myers crap. After last year, it's most definitely not fucking funny, old man. I mean, look at Jamie. She's scared out of her fucking mind, and you keep on with the charade that Michael Myers is still chasing after every goddamn person left in Haddonfield." Tina got closer to Sam.

"The motherfucker is DEAD, Loomis. Do you understand? DEAD. I can't... no, I WON'T let you continue with this ridiculous BULLSHIT, YOU CRAZY, OLD, FUCKING LUNAT..."

"Are you finished?" Sam cut Tina off calmly yet sharply.

Tina looked around as if to say, "I guess I am, yeah."

Sam looked at her intently and with an eye that told her how serious he was, "Michael Myers has come home. That much I can promise you. I don't know how, but he is."

Sam had his Thorn theory, but he wasn't about to bring that up to an already agitated young woman who probably already thought him crazy.

"Well, if that's true, how do you *know* he's back? And no bullshit reasoning. I've heard your nonsense before." Asked Tina.

Loomis looked toward the ground, unsure of how to answer that question, especially without making him seem crazier to her. "There was a grave desecration earlier today. Someone dug up the coffin of a six-year-old girl."

"That's it? That's all you have? Sounds like standard Haddonfield Halloween prankster shit to me, Doctor." Replied Tina.

"That's not all," Sam began, carefully choosing his words. But he figured he could convince Tina how she came to be at the clinic, even if the explanation sounded batshit. "I think that Michael and Jamie have some kind of link. She can channel what he sees."

"What, like telepathy?" Tina was stunned. She had no idea she'd be talking to Jamie's Doctor about mind powers tonight, and she immediately thought the men in white coats needed to come to collect Sam.

"Something like that, yes. That's what these seizures Jamie has been having have been about. As I said, she's been seeing what her uncle sees. It's how we found you, Tina. How do you think we knew where you were? Do you know that it wasn't your boyfriend driving you around tonight?" Sam looked directly into Tina's eyes, and she looked like she would throw up.

Tina couldn't take much more of this. She needed a drink. Maybe fifty. That's what she needed right now. To feel nothing. Tears and rage filled her head. "BULLSHIT, SAM! I don't believe



a word of this fucking horseshit. Jamie is perfectly fine, and I am perfectly fine. No bodies have been piling up. You have zero real evidence for *anything* you're saying. Jamie is having flashbacks, and you damn well know it. She dreams of stabbing her stepmom and of HIM. She's not channeling his fucking eyesight. What a crock. I'm outta here. And you should just stay the FUCK away from Jamie. It can't be good for her. *You* can't be good for her."

Tina turned around and returned to the hospital foyer, "Tina, wait. Please." Sam pleaded.

"Not now, Sam. I need to say goodnight to Jamie!" She shouted back to him.

"There's been a body," Sam said softly.

Tina stopped, turned, and looked into Sam's eyes.

"Who's?" Tina asked.

"A man. Not far from where we assumed we buried Michael last year." Sam replied.

"Really? That's it? He could have died from anything out there in the fucking boonies, Sam. You're gonna have to do better."

"His head had been crushed to the point of unidentification."

Tina's head was spinning with an unease that had rooted itself in her stomach. The memory of how Mikey had acted when he picked her up kept replaying in her mind. It was making her feel nauseous. He had felt different somehow, bigger and more imposing than ever before. And that smell! That musky, earthy scent lingered on him like a second skin. It was repulsive, and it wasn't Mikey's smell. Tina couldn't shake the feeling that she had dodged a bullet. What if it was Michael Myers in that car with her? Could she have been a victim tonight? It was too frightening even to consider, so she pushed the fucking thought

away as soon as it appeared. Still, the idea persisted, gnawing at her like a rat at a piece of cheese.

Her thoughts turned to Doctor Loomis, and she felt a little apprehensive. The man was a walking, talking, breathing embodiment of obsession, and he was convinced that Michael Myers was back from the dead. It was all a little too much for Tina to process. She didn't know what to believe or who to trust. Maybe she needed to talk to Rachel about this. Rachel was level-headed and rational, and she could help her make sense of things. They could convince the hospital to let Loomis go. This wasn't healthy in the slightest, and Tina didn't want to be a part of it any longer than she needed to be. She walked back into the foyer and rejoined Jamie. She approached Jamie, who was crying on the front steps leading up to the main room. Tina sat beside her and held her close, bringing her into a hug. "Crazy night, huh, babe?" Tina said, tears forming in her eyes and a lump building in her throat.

Jamie nodded and held tight onto Tina's midsection, bringing her head onto Tina's bosom. Tina patted Jamie's head softly and said, "It's okay, honey. I understand it's tough. I'm so sorry for everything that's happened to you. You need to know that none of it is your fault. Not a damn thing, baby girl. I promise we'll get you sorted out. I'll call up Rachel, and we'll all sit down together and figure out what we all need to do. For now..." Tina pulled Jamie away and looked at her tear-streaked face. "For now, I am so sorry. I need to go."

Jamie tried to pull herself close again, but Tina protested and held her back. "Tina, please! Don't go! WHY?!" Yelled Jamie, her eyes becoming red and filled with tears.

Tina barely realized that Jamie was speaking. In reality, Tina was in one hell of a daze and needed to get out. "Oh, honey,

look... Someday, you'll understand."

"Understand what? The boogeyman was with you!" Jamie said, sniffing away more tears.

"Well, that's one way to describe him. What I mean is that I'm in love with a monster. Not *your* monster by any stretch of the imagination, but a monster nonetheless. And because of it, I *have* to go to him and tell him exactly what an ass... What a big green ogre I really think he is. And hopefully, with time, we can work out our little love affair. I'm so happy you're talking again, Jamie. I really am."

Tina looked into Jamie's eyes. Jamie looked down, acquiescing to Tina's desire to leave. She felt so alone, defeated, and frightened, especially *for* Tina.

"I'm so sorry, Jamie. I promise I will be back in the morning to see you, okay?" Tina started toward the front door.

Jamie tried again to plead with her, screaming, "He'll kill you, too!"

Doctor Loomis cane-walked quickly after Tina.

"Tina, please... Be sensible!" Sam yelled at Tina.

"I'm never sensible if I can help it! Now please, Sam, STOP filling that girl's head with all this *SHIT*." Tina opened the door and walked out into the cold October night.

Sam looked over at Deputies Farrah and Ross, who were guarding the front door. "Well, go follow her, for God's sake! She doesn't have a car. Why not offer a ride?"

The deputies were more than happy doing nothing at all, but they conceded.

"For you, Doc? Anything." The deputies left and did as they were told.

Jamie was feeling a complex mixture of confusion and hurt. She retreated to her bedroom and slammed the door behind her as she entered with a resounding thud. She had experienced a tumult of emotions in rapid succession, from deep sadness to seething anger, from desperation to helplessness, with a dash of extreme happiness as she danced with Billy. And now her mind raced as she tried to make sense of Tina's sudden departure. With a heavy heart, Jamie had pleaded with Tina, begging her repeatedly to stay. She even reached out to Doctor Loomis, hoping he could help her understand why Tina had left. But all her efforts had been in vain, leaving her feeling lost and alone. Jamie knew why. It was that damn party. What was so fucking important at that party? And why was Jamie being left in the dust?

Sitting on her bed, Jamie wept quietly to herself, and as she did, her mind began to wander as she considered Tina's motives. She wondered why Tina would leave her in such a vulnerable state with no explanation or warning. Jamie was painfully aware that Tina had become embroiled in her and Rachel's little horror show, but she had thought that Tina was different. Fucking grownups. *Selfish* grownups.

Jamie started to think hard about her vision. Her uncle was going to kill Tina not an hour before, and while Tina might not have believed her vision or taken it seriously, Jamie sure as hell did. Thinking of this, she knew Tina was still in grave danger. No one was going to do anything. If Jamie didn't act now, Tina would probably be murdered tonight. Taking a deep breath, Jamie stood up from the bed and approached the window. As

she looked out into the night sky, she felt a sudden rush of adrenaline course through her body. She knew what she had to do and knew it wouldn't be easy. Summoning every ounce of determination within herself, Jamie took a deep breath to steady her nerves and tried to gain composure. With deliberate caution, she wrapped her trembling fingers around the worn handle of the window. Slowly, inch by inch, she exerted just enough force to lift the weathered pane, revealing a sliver of the inky blackness that awaited outside. The night air greeted her with a chill, sending a shiver coursing through her. Gathering more courage, she took a leap of faith, and her body soared gracefully through the void. As her feet met the ground, the soft rustling of leaves masked her landing, damping the impact to a barely audible thud. This was Jamie's first time outside the hospital grounds since she arrived. Her heart began to thud rapidly, and she was nervous as hell, but she carried forward and began running down the sidewalk.

About four blocks down and gasping for air, Jamie's heart pounded in her chest as she continued to sprint through the dimly lit streets. Jamie realized that she had to slow down. Running in costume shoes wasn't the best idea, but she had no choice. She didn't want to slow down, even if her feet were killing her. But she was tired, exhausted, and emotionally worn out. But really, she was scared shitless of the rustling sound she kept hearing behind her since she had started running, and it was the one thing that *kept* her running even when her lungs and legs wanted to give out. But now she had no choice but to stop and breathe. She slowed her pace and came to a stop, her gasps for air filling the silence of the night. Behind her, there was a shrubbery, and she could hear someone behind it. Jamie's curiosity got the better of her, and she began moving

towards the bush. Her pounding heart seemed to drown out all other sounds as she inched closer, her nerves fraying with every step. And then, emerging from the shadows, *he* appeared. His pale mask stared down at her, piercing her soul with accusing black eyes. The glint of a wickedly sharp knife caught her eye, reflecting her own image back at her in the darkness. Jamie's strength waned, overwhelmed by fear and exhaustion, and her trembling body surrendered to gravity. She collapsed onto the dewy grass beneath her, and a scream tore from her throat.

\* \* \*

Jamie's body jolted upright from its fetal position when she was startled by a touch on her back. Her eyes were wide with alarm. The stuttering voice that followed was all too familiar, and relief washed over her like a tidal wave. "Billy?! Why are you here?" Jamie exclaimed, her voice laced with a mix of surprise and frustration. Yet, deep down, a sense of joy warmed her heart at the sight of him.

With a hint of nervousness, Billy stammered out his response, his words stumbling over one another. "I... I... I kn...kn...know w...w...where Tina is go...going!" he managed to say, his eyes filled with an earnestness that demanded attention.

Jamie's brow furrowed, her anxiety momentarily forgotten as she absorbed Billy's words. "Yeah, I know, the Tower Farm," she replied dismissively.

A glimmer of resilience ignited in Billy's eyes as he continued, his stutter evaporating, leaving behind a newfound confidence. "But do you know how to get there on foot? Because I do," he

## CHAPTER 5

declared matter-of-factly, his voice steady and resolute.

Jamie smiled, and off they went.

## Chapter 6

Tina stepped out of the police cruiser, grateful for the ride but eager to go. The journey had been silent, save for the occasional wisecrack from Deputies Farrah and Ross. They reminisced about their wild party days, laughing at the memories of their youth. “We weren’t as crazy as you youngsters are nowadays,” Ross said with a chuckle. “I don’t know what you kids are up to these days, but we were normal! You, on the other hand, are a different story altogether!” Deputy Farrah added, her eyes twinkling with amusement.

Tina tried to ignore their words but couldn’t help feeling annoyed. She had never been a fan of cops, and these two were no exception. Kelly Meeker, Sheriff Ben Meeker’s daughter from Haddonfield, was the worst of the lot. She always bragged about her “daddy the sheriff” status, wearing various versions of a t-shirt that read “Cops do it by the book!” It was enough to make Tina roll her eyes. But then, Michael Myers murdered Kelly last year. Tina couldn’t believe it initially, but the news spread like wildfire through the town. And as much as she hated to admit it to herself, she felt a sense of relief. Kelly had been insufferable, always flaunting her father’s position and acting like she was above everyone else. But now, she was gone, and Tina couldn’t help feeling a twinge of satisfaction. Unlike



Rachel, Tina never felt guilty about her feelings about Kelly's death. Maybe if she'd been a little more humble once in a while, she'd feel bad for her death.

Tina craved the solace of tonight's escapade. Badly. In whatever form it might take. She couldn't quite put her finger on it, but she knew she needed something – catharsis, perhaps? A release from the shackles of her mind? Or maybe it was a defiant rejection of everything Doctor Loomis had told her earlier that day. On the surface, Tina had always been the kind of girl who reveled in sticking it to the man, defying any and all societal expectations, and blazing her own trail of what she once called “the path of ridiculousness” during a heart-to-heart with Rachel. But beneath that rebellious exterior, a part of her couldn't help but wonder if Doctor Loomis was right. She couldn't bring herself to admit it, not even to herself.

However, the one thing that weighed heavily on her conscience was leaving Jamie in her moment of need. What kind of person was she to go, leaving that little girl to cry on the staircase? She tried to shove the thoughts away. Tina had hoped that Rachel would swing by the hospital to check on Jamie, but she hadn't gotten in touch since their conversation earlier in the day. That nagging worry gnawed at her fiercely.

As she ventured into the night, Tina clung to the hope that she would run into Rachel somewhere along the way. She imagined Rachel explaining that she'd been at the Tower farm all day, just as they'd planned, and hadn't found the time to call. But she doubted it.

As Tina ambled toward the dilapidated Tower farmhouse, an icy shiver raced down her spine, making her acutely aware of the plummeting temperature since the early afternoon. She regretted not bringing a jacket but was steadfast about not

concealing her absolutely killer costume. The farmhouse itself was far from impressive. Throughout high school, Tina had listened to stories about the legendary Tower farm parties, but when she attended her first one two years prior, she found herself sorely disappointed. Sure, the parties boasted copious amounts of alcohol and plenty of weed, but the farmhouse was nothing more than a weathered double-wide mobile home that had seen better days. The worn-out furniture, which hadn't been replaced in over four decades, was marred by cigarette burns and stains from countless spilled liquids. Rust had claimed the aluminum siding and monstrous weeds encroached upon the perimeter. Tina thought it could be used as a set piece for The Texas Chain Saw Massacre. Despite these shortcomings, the Tower farm double-wide remained the perfect, cost-free spot for young adults to let loose on Halloween night.

The deafening sound of Mötley Crüe's "Shout at the Devil" blared from the trailer. The DJ, Haddonfield High School senior Gary Malbrach, was determined to play what his mother, Janice, called "Devil Music." The Halloween decorations adorning the trailer's exterior were quite the sight; flickering orange and yellow lights cast eerie shadows in every direction. Skeletons, ghouls, and many other spooky items perfectly captured the essence of the holiday. The most striking decorations were the numerous pumpkins and Jack o' Lanterns, intricately carved with terrifying designs and scattered as far as the eye could see.

As Tina approached the home's front door, she felt the vibrations from the music pulsating through the ground beneath her feet. She hesitated momentarily, absorbing the chaos and excitement around her, letting the moment take her away from everything. The guilt, the fear, Loomis' words. Everything.

Slowly, she pushed open the door and was immediately engulfed by a thick haze of pot and cigarette smoke. Through the dense fog, she discerned the silhouettes of at least sixty frenzied party-goers, dancing, smoking, and drinking. The crowd was tightly packed inside the trailer, making it difficult for Tina to navigate. Tina thought that If the fire department were here, you'd better believe they'd shut this shit down. She could feel the heat and energy radiating from the throngs of people and was swept up in the excitement as she searched for her friends.

Tina spotted Spitz and Samantha leaning against the refrigerator in the cramped kitchen. Spitz wore a stained navy blue mechanic's jumpsuit, a white mask perched on his head, and a smoldering cigarette dangled from his lips. Samantha sported a seductive red devil costume with a horned tiara and tail. Her pouty lips curved into a broad grin as she let out a hearty chuckle, likely in response to an off-color joke Spitz had just whispered. As Tina drew closer, she asked, "What's so funny?"

In unison, Spitz and Samantha let out ear-piercing shrieks, "TINA!!! YOU CAME!!!"

They embraced, and Sam gave Tina a peck on the cheek. "Yeah, I almost didn't, though. Jamie had a breakdown at the hospital, but I just had to get outta there. Wayyyyy too much right now. I need a fuckin' drink, folks!"

"I hear that," said Spitz as he opened the fridge, grabbed a beer, and handed it to Tina. "Here, this oughta take some of the edge off."

As Tina grasped the cold can of beer, she felt a sense of relief and anticipation coursing through her body. With an eager pull from her finger, the cap popped open, releasing a satisfying hiss of carbonation. She brought the can to her lips, the condensation cold against her fingers, and took a deep,

satisfying gulp. The icy liquid rushed down her throat, sending a shiver of pleasure through her body. She drank the entire can in one go, feeling the buzz of alcohol spreading through her veins, dulling her senses and numbing her mind, precisely what she hoped it would do. As she lowered the empty can, she noticed Spitz and Samantha staring at her, their eyes wide with surprise and awe at her impressive chug. "Holy fuckin' Moses, Tina," Spitz said.

"You did need a drink," said Sam.

Tina burped and said, "I'll take another one, please."

\* \* \*

Sheriff Meeker had been a good partner, and he knew that. But as he stood in Jamie's bedroom, Sam Loomis couldn't shake off the dread that had enveloped him since they realized the children were gone. The hospital had been combed, but there was no sign of them. Where could they have gone? And, more importantly, were they safe? Sam's heart raced with worry as he tried to piece together what had happened. Had they been taken? Had they run off somewhere? He couldn't even imagine what Jamie must be feeling, and guilt weighed heavily on him. Had he pushed her too far? Had his obsession with finding Michael clouded his judgment and affected his ability to care for her properly?

As he looked around Jamie's room, the memories flooded back. The first night they met, he pulled his gun on her. He knew it had been a mistake, but he couldn't shake off the image of the terrified young girl he had pointed it at. And now, as

he wept for her, he felt he had let her down again. He should have protected her better and been a better father figure to her. He felt as if he'd now lost her for good. Not in the way he lost Michael; to some degree, Michael was lost before he even came into Sam's care.

The room was silent, save for the sound of Sam's sobs. He couldn't bear the thought of losing Jamie, not after everything that had happened. He felt defeated and exhausted, his failures pressing down on him. Sam dropped his cane on the wooden floor, collapsed onto Jamie's bed, and wept for her. Sam's tears continued to fall as he tried to steady his breathing. He wiped his face with the back of his hand, taking deep breaths to calm himself down. He knew he needed to act quickly to find Jamie and Billy before it was too late. Sam's mind raced with different scenarios and locations where the children could hide. It dawned on him.

Tina. The Tower farm. It must have been about an hour since their disappearance (no one realized they had gone missing for the first half hour), and Sam figured it couldn't take more than an hour to walk out to the farm. In Jamie and Billy's case, Sam assumed they were running at full speed to get out there as soon as possible. Jamie would want to protect Tina. Jamie had always had a fierce loyalty and commitment to those she loved, which Sam had always loved about her. To Sam, Jamie was the polar opposite of Michael. Jamie would do whatever it took to stop Michael from killing more people tonight. As admirable as that was, Sam wasn't about to let Jamie sacrifice herself. Sam pulled out his radio. "Meeker, Loomis here." He said.

After a few moments, the radio crackled. "Meeker here. I'm in the basement, but... I'm sorry, Sam. We need to send out a search party."

"Meeker! I know where they went. We must get the cavalry and get out to the Tower farm as soon as possible. I'll meet you on the main level in two minutes." Sam replied.

"Are you sure, Sam?" Meeker crackled back on the radio.

Sam looked at a photo sitting on top of Jamie's dresser. It was of Jamie as a baby, cradled by her mother, Laurie Strode. Sam said on the radio: "Dead sure."

\* \* \*

Tina sat alone outside the double-wide on a swing chair, smoking a cigarette. With each successive drag, more and more of her red lipstick came off on the filter. She held a beer tightly in the other hand, and beside her lay four empty cans she had already gone through since she first arrived. People kept coming and going beside her, trolloping up and down the steps. One guy, drunk as a skunk, almost fell over her. Tina was under the assumption that going out to the party would make her feel better. But, the reality was starkly different. She was having a hard time dealing with being here, contrasted with the extreme guilt about leaving Jamie behind. She didn't know why she had left her like that. Mikey wasn't even at the party, and she really didn't want to think that the guy in the Camaro might not have been Mikey at all. That, among other things, was what was wiggling her out. All Tina could think about was Jamie. But fuck! That homicidal lunatic might have been driving her around earlier. And if that wasn't Mikey, then what had happened to him?! Mikey wouldn't dare let another person drive his precious black beauty. She tried pushing the

thoughts out of her mind, so she guzzled the beer and got up to use the bathroom.

As she got up, she realized swiftly how drunk she really was. Her brain felt like it was swimming inside her skull, and she was losing her balance. Her foot caught on a porch stoop, and she began to fall when a man in a Tiger costume saved her from what would have been a nasty tumble. "Oh, fuck! Thank you!" She yelled somewhat obnoxiously loud to the man tiger.

The Tiger costumed man helped her to the front door. She entered, and Tina struggled to navigate through the thick cloud of smoke that filled the air, making it difficult for her to breathe. The overpowering aroma of cigarettes and the stench of cheap beer and sweat overwhelmed her senses. The Michael Jackson classic, *Thriller*, was blaring from the speakers, and Vincent Price's voice sounded like it was an ethereal God in the room, haunting the sixty or so party-goers as they danced.

The alcohol had taken its toll on Tina, and the smoke wasn't helping her one iota. The masks and makeup everyone wore only added to the claustrophobic atmosphere, and the tight fit in the house made her feel like the walls were closing in around her. She fought through the crowd of sweaty bodies, pushing and shoving until she reached the bathroom. It felt like an eternity until she reached the bathroom, but the reprieve was far from comforting.

Upon entering, potent and noxious odors assaulted Tina's nostrils. The stench of urine and feces mingled in the air, creating an unbearable combination that made her gag involuntarily. The state of the bathroom was appalling, with the toilet bowl stained in a sickly shade of goldenrod and smears of tarry shit clinging to its upper rim. The sight alone was enough to turn her stomach, threatening to unleash a torrent of bile. Wanting to

minimize her time in such a vile space, Tina grabbed a handful of toilet paper and set to work, wiping down the seat as best she could. She scrubbed vigorously, her movements fueled by absolute disgust, hoping to rid the surface of any lingering filth.

Finally, she mercifully sat down to relieve herself, her head spinning and her body feeling weak and faint. She closed her eyes, trying to steady herself, when a sudden loud bang on the bathroom door startled her, causing her to jump out of her skin in fright. "Hey... open up! That bathroom ain't for pissin'! It's for fuckin'! If you wanna take a leak, go out back! Hahahahah!!!" She could tell right away that it was Spitz being a smartass.

Tina finished up and opened the door. Sure enough, Spitz and Samantha were there. "Hey, Tina, you don't look so good. Let's go outside for some air. Spitz has a prank he wants to pull on those deputies that brought you here." Samantha said, and they all laughed as they made their way outside.

\* \* \*

The two deputies, Nick Ross and Tom Farrah, were engrossed in a game of blackjack on the center console of their police cruiser. The dim glow of the cruiser's interior light illuminated the scene, casting long shadows on the deck of cards as the game unfolded.

With a mere twelve points in his hand, Farrah looked at Ross and declared, "Hit me." Ross, wearing a sly grin, placed a King of Spades card on the table, causing Farrah to exclaim, "Motherfucker!" in frustration as he realized his hand had gone bust.



“And I win again!” Ross boasted triumphantly, scooping up the five dollars he had amassed from Farrah’s billfold.

Farrah, visibly irritated, responded, “Yeah, yeah. I’m cleaned out, so the game’s over, Ross.”

Farrah voiced his discontent as they prepared to wrap up their boredom-induced gambling session. “What the fuck are we doin’ out here, anyway?” he questioned. “Doing what the good Doctor Loomis told us to do—keeping watch over the youngins’ out here,” Ross replied matter-of-factly.

Farrah shook his head, a hint of frustration evident in his voice. “Yeah, I know that, but it feels like a complete waste of time. We should be out hunting Michael Myers or something. Not just waiting for Godot.”

“Godot? Who’s Godot?” Ross asked, perplexed by the unfamiliar reference.

“You don’t know Godot? It’s a play about, and this is just my opinion, two guys sitting around waiting for something to happen instead of trying to make something happen,” Farrah explained, slightly exasperated by Ross’s lack of knowledge.

Ross shrugged dismissively. “Play? That explains it. Never been much for theater. I prefer the movies. You ever see that one? Alien? Hell of a thing. Guy gets his chest ripped open from the inside by this little alien that looks like a greasy green shit. Now that’s entertainment!” Farrah stared at Ross, taken aback by his taste in films.

Before their conversation could continue, piercing screams shattered the night, causing both deputies to freeze momentarily. The gut-wrenching cries of terror emanated from the front of the Tower farm double-wide. Their eyes widened as they spotted a young woman sprinting towards them, her face etched with panic, desperately trying to escape from a man

who wore a mask hauntingly similar to the description they had heard of the psychopathic killer, Michael Myers, from last year's massacre. In his hand, the masked man brandished a menacing kitchen knife. Ross and Farrah let instinct take over in that split second as they lunged into action. They leaped out of their patrol car, their hands gripping their service revolvers, and aimed directly at the masked assailant. Their voices rang out in unison, commanding the intruder to "FREEZE!" in a desperate bid. Truth be told, Farrah and Ross were scared shitless.

Silence hung in the air for a brief moment as the tension thickened. Farrah's hands were shaking. But then, unexpected words broke the silence. "Don't take me!" the girl cried out from her prone position on the dirt. "You can have my friend, though. She's single!" The masked man lowered his knife, cocking his head perplexedly. His menacing demeanor dissolved as he responded, "Got her phone number?"

A burst of laughter erupted from a group of onlookers watching the unfolding scene. The masked figure, no longer a fearsome presence, removed his mask, revealing the face of a young, foolish prankster. His eyes widened in shock as he realized that the cops had actually pulled their guns on him. "It's just a prank, officers! We're... I mean, I'm really sorry," the contrite prankster stammered.

Farrah and Ross exchanged a knowing glance, their hearts racing from the adrenaline-fueled encounter. Sheathing their revolvers, they approached the young man, their tone stern but laced with extreme fright.

"Don't play around like that. Next time, you're liable to get arrested. Or worse—shot," Farrah warned.

The prankster, his face now flushed with a mix of embarrass-

ment and relief, nodded vigorously. "Thanks for not arresting me, officers, or shooting me, for that matter. Won't happen again," he promised earnestly, offering a half-hearted salute as a gesture of gratitude before quickly making his way toward the barn across from the double-wide.

"Wait up, Spitz," said the girl in the red devil costume as she waved goodbye to the deputies.

## Chapter 7

Samantha sprinted after Spitz, but he had a considerable lead over her. Her eyes were fixed on him as he rushed towards the barn door and pulled it open. “Wait for me, fucker!” she cried as she tried to catch up.

He didn’t seem to hear her because Spitz closed the door behind him. *The prick!* She thought. About ten seconds later, Samantha got to the large barn door and opened it. She was greeted by the strong smell of hay and the odor from years of decayed wood, mildew, and manure. She saw several newborn kittens rolling around on the floor. Samantha bent down and picked up a fuzzy little golden kitten, stroking its soft fur as she called for Spitz. He had run into the barn so fast, way ahead of her, and here she was, alone with a few kittens. Where the fuck did he go? “Spitz!” She cried, wondering if he was trying to spook her.

Samantha made her way through the barn, her eyes scanning the barely lit interior in search of Spitz. She had no idea where he had gone and was uneasy about being in the old barn alone. As she neared one of the vacant stables, the sound of hay rustling against the wooden floor resonated in her ears. The stench of livestock and hay filled her nostrils as she pushed open the creaky door and stepped inside. The stable was dimly lit, with

only a few streaks of moonlight filtering through the slats of the wooden walls.

Her eyes immediately fell on the hay bales stacked high in the corner of the stable. They were meticulously arranged, with the more giant bales forming the base and the smaller ones stacked neatly. A few individual bales were scattered on the ground, but a thick layer of hay covered the entire floor and crunched under her feet. She took a deep breath, inhaling the earthy scent of fresh hay, and slowly walked towards the pile.

Suddenly, she felt a forceful shove from behind that sent her hurtling forward onto the bed of hay. The rough hay scratched against her skin as she tried to steady herself, her heart racing with fear and confusion.

Samantha screamed and turned around to see Spitz in that stupid fucking costume that he just *had* to have. "Looks just like him!" Spitz had said when he picked it up in Chicago a few weeks back.

Samantha had known from the moment he laid eyes on the costume that it would lead to nothing but trouble, and now he was playing games with her. She could feel her anger boiling over as she glared at him with disdain. She detested his games, his childish antics that always seemed to end in disaster. "Spitz, knock it off and take off that mask. That wasn't very fucking funny. I could have really gotten hurt!" She said, lying on the ground.

Samantha caught Spitz standing before her, his head tilting from side to side as if scrutinizing her intently. But before she could understand what was happening, he began to advance, brandishing a sharp kitchen knife he had brought from home.

"SPITZ, STOP IT. IT ISN'T FUCKING FUNNY, DAMN IT." Samantha felt a potent mix of fear and anger coursing through

her veins. She couldn't believe he was behaving like this—had he completely lost his mind? As he continued to advance towards her, she backed away slowly until she felt the stiff resistance of the hay bales behind her. Spitz was inching closer and closer until his legs were straddling hers. Looming above Samantha, he raised the knife high, and Samantha let out a blood-curdling scream. She closed her eyes, bracing for the worst, as the blade descended with a sickening swoosh. But to her immense relief, it hit the hay bale just inches from her head, sending a cloud of dust billowing into the air.

He raised the knife and brought it down repeatedly, the sound of the blade ringing in Samantha's ears. Suddenly, he stopped, and when he let out a sudden cackle of laughter and then removed the mask, Samantha's suspicions were confirmed. This whole act was just another of Spitz's cruel, twisted jokes. Samantha slapped Spitz on the cheek, leaving behind one hell of a red welt. "You mother *FUCKER!* I HATE YOU!" she said.

"Yeah, but ya love me, too, don't you?" Spitz replied, still laughing.

She looked cheekily at him and said, "Well, I fucking wish I didn't, you motherfucking piece of shit!"

Spitz knelt over her, leaned in, and said, "I'm sorry, babe. Look, I couldn't resist. You know how I get. It was all in good fun, but I can *clearly* see that you weren't having any of the fun. I'm really sorry, babe," he said, with what seemed to be genuine remorse. "Let me make it up to you, okay?"

Spitz pulled himself close to her, and they kissed. Spitz leaned in further and gripped one of Samantha's breasts. "Spitz, not here!" Samantha said.

"It's fine, babe. No one else is here. Tina is out back talking to the pigs that almost shot me."

“You probably deserved a bullet to the head, honey. And if you keep calling them pigs, they just might do it.” Samantha replied and laughed.

“Yeah, probably... I shouldn’t have pulled that stunt. Still love me?”

“Yeah, I guess so. Come here.”

Samantha grabbed Spitz’s waist and pulled him down to the hay-covered floor. Samantha pulled off the top button of the mechanic’s suit he was wearing and yanked the zipper down. Spitz pulled the suit off completely, grabbing a Trojan out of one of the pockets as he did so. “Oh, of course, you have one. Ready to go, as usual. What do I *see* in you?” Samantha said, with a sly look in her eyes.

“Well, at least I’m prepared!” Spitz replied with a laugh.

Smiling, he pulled down his boxer shorts and put the condom on over his cock gently. Samantha looked up and giggled as he struggled to get it on. She roared with laughter when he pinched several of his pubic hairs in the latex, causing him to squirm in discomfort. After adjusting, Spitz looked down at Samantha and gave her a wink, indicating he was all good to go. Samantha grabbed Spitz by the ass and guided him inside her. Spitz entered slowly at first, taking in the warm sensations. This was only the second time they had had sex, and the first time was a rushed experience, to say the least, so Spitz wanted to make sure he took his time. After a minute or so of soft fucking, Spitz picked up his speed, enjoying the sounds of ecstasy Samantha was making. Spitz took a moment to look deeply into her eyes, and he could imagine that she was enjoying him quite a great deal, which only increased his enjoyment.

Spitz brought Samantha in for a kiss, and then he felt a massive and searing pain entering his back, which thrust

through his body and out his stomach. He wretched violently and vomited a gushing stream of vibrant red blood onto Samantha's stomach and exposed breasts, painting her pale skin in a bright red crimson. Samantha let out a piercing scream as she saw three large, rusty spikes poking out of Spitz's stomach, and when more blood from Spitz's mouth poured over her chest, she began to scream so loudly it made her ears hurt like hell. Above Spitz's now dying body, she could see a tall, dark figure standing over them like a scepter from hell. Whoever it was had the same mask Spitz wore earlier, only more... *used*.

With no time to register or think about what was happening, Samantha pushed her boyfriend's naked, bloody corpse off her, and Spitz's corpse hit the ground with a muted thud. She rolled and picked herself up. Their assailant was standing in the corner, now holding a large scythe in his hands. Samantha was running on pure adrenaline. It was pure fight or flight, so she did the only thing she could think to do. She pulled the pitchfork out of Spitz's back, sending more blood spurting from the holes pierced through Spitz's back. She didn't have a choice; there was nowhere to run. All she could do at that moment was fight. "You son of a BITCH!" Samantha yelled as she thrust the spikes forward toward the killer's chest.

Still grasping the scythe in one hand, the Shape standing before her jutted his free hand forward, deftly catching the pitchfork and pulling it out of her hands. He threw it violently at one of the barn's support beams, and the bloody implement cracked in two. Samantha froze. She wasn't ready to die. But it didn't look like she had much of a choice.

"Oh, fuck." She said quietly.

With one powerful, deft swing of the scythe, The Shape cut Samantha's neck through, cleanly slicing through muscle and



bone, sending her head flying across the barn floor. Blood spurted from Samantha's neck like a geyser, her vital fluids painting the barn's interior a wet crimson. Michael Myers walked forward, stepped over the corpse that was once Samantha, and walked out of the barn, eyeing the two cops that dropped the other girl off earlier this evening.

\* \* \*

Deputies Tom Farrah and Nick Ross were still playing quick blackjack games when they heard the screaming coming from the barn. "God damn, they're weird, aren't they? Screaming like that. What the hell are they doing in there?" Asked Tom.

"Nothing normal, that's for sure." Replied Nick.

Tom laid down an ace and a Queen of hearts. "Ahhhhh, fuck you." Said Nick.

"Got ya again! Five bucks, please." Tom had won the last three hands in a row and was grinning like an idiot over his latest of the evening's triumphs.

"Okay, I'm just convinced you're cheating. There's no way you can win this often." Said Nick.

"Nope. Not at all. Just old-fashioned Irish luck."

Ross rolled his eyes, "You're not even Irish."

"Am too."

"Are not."

The screams from the barn continued, and both deputies looked toward the barn. "Should we go take a look?" Asked Tom. And then the screaming suddenly stopped.

"Guess it's over." Said Nick.

Tom and Nick started to clean up the cards, and Tom put his winnings in his pockets. "Hey, look..." Nick said.

They saw the same kid with the mask slowly approaching their police cruiser with a scythe.

"What the fu..." Both deputies uttered at the same time.

The masked figure approached the driver's side door, where Nick was seated, his breath fogging the window. Nick hesitantly rolled down the glass, attempting to reason with the ominous stranger. "Hey, man, someone's gonna get hurt with that thing!" he stammered. But before he could even blink, Michael Myers' hand shot into the cabin, seizing Nick's throat with a vice-like grip. Panicked, Nick fumbled for his service revolver, but it was too late. Myers tore Nick's Adam's apple from his throat with a sickening crunch and viciously jammed it into Nick's right eye. A gruesome cocktail of blood and pus-filled fluid erupted from the wound, splattering the dashboard.

Tom's heart raced as he watched in horror, his body frozen in shock. He finally mustered the courage to scramble out of the cruiser, but the monster was faster, more relentless. In one monstrous leap, he soared onto the cruiser's roof, scythe gleaming in his hand. He swung the wicked blade downward, slicing open Tom Farrah's cheek just as he stumbled out of the car. Blood streamed down his face, mixing with his tears of terror. The Shape kicked Tom to the ground with a force that knocked the wind out of him and leaped on top of him, crushing his stomach. Gasping for air, Tom could do nothing as Michael's hand clamped onto his exposed lower jaw while his other hand gripped Tom's upper mandible. With a gut-wrenching yank, the Shape tore Tom's face apart, leaving a grisly, unrecognizable mess of bone, teeth, and blood.

Michael Myers walked away, leaving the two deputies to bleed

to death.

\* \* \*

Tina didn't think that Spitz's joke was very funny. She felt that anyone willing to dress like Jamie's psychotic uncle should be ashamed of themselves. Fictional killers? Fine. Dress up like Jason Vorhees and Freddy Krueger all you want, but Michael Myers? Fuck you. Tina had gone back inside the double-wide for another beer after the stunt. She had started to feel slightly better as the night progressed, but the guilt still overtook her in the end. It was almost ten-thirty at night, and she was ready to leave. She had built a plan in her head to say goodbye to Spitz and Samantha (she'd give Spitz a tongue lashing for his "joke" before her goodbye, just for good measure) and ask the deputies for a ride back to the hospital. She'd spend the night with Jamie, and then she'd get them some breakfast that wasn't the god-awful institutional plastic shit they feed Jamie every single day. Tina walked outside and took a large breath of the fresh October air. The fresh air was much needed after inhaling only second-hand cigarette and pot smoke inside the trailer. She saw that most of the kids were going out to another party anyway, so she didn't feel too bad about leaving early.

Tina took slow, deliberate steps toward the barn, allowing herself to enjoy the cool, crisp autumn air. She needed the walk to help clear her head and let the alcohol dissipate. As she approached the barn, she noticed that the door was slightly open, and she could see the shadows of someone moving inside. She hesitated momentarily, not wanting to intrude on their

privacy if they were vulnerable, but decided it was better to let them know she was leaving.

Tina cautiously pushed the door open and peeked inside. The barn was dimly lit, and she could barely make out the shapes of one of them in the corner. "Spitz! Samantha! Is anyone here?" she called out, but the musty air of the barn swallowed up her voice.

As she stepped forward, her foot hit a pile of loose hay, and she stumbled slightly. She regained her balance and called out again, a little louder.

"COME ON, GUYS. Where are YOU?"

There was no reply.

*"Maybe they left?"* Tina thought to herself.

As Tina scanned the barn, she couldn't spot any of her companions. However, she noticed a litter of barn kittens scampering around. Unable to resist their cuteness, she reached down and scooped one up, caressing its soft fur. The barn was dimly lit, making it hard to see, and Tina, with a slight shock, realized that her hands were somehow sticky and wet. Tina brought the kitten to a brighter area of the barn, where she discovered the cat was soaked in something thick. She wondered if the kittens had gotten into tree sap or some other sticky substance. However, as more light hit the kitten, she gasped in horror. The cat was not covered in sap - but in blood. Its fur was matted and stained, and the kitten's tiny body was trembling in her hands. Tina dropped the cat and turned to run.

Before she could move, Tina saw Samantha. She was propped up on one of the barn's support beams, a sizable three-pronged gardening tool inserted into her chest, holding her in place on the beam. Blood covered and dripped from her body, and her

head was missing.

She clasped her hands over her mouth to stifle her inevitable screams and stepped back slowly. She began to cry, but she was too shocked to scream just yet. She tripped on something as she stepped back and fell on top of Spitz's punctured and eviscerated corpse. As Tina plummeted, her elbow slammed into Spitz's gut with brutal force, causing the lifeless body to expel a ghastly gush of congealed blood that splattered across her horrified face. She turned to avoid further blood sprays as she held back her need to vomit. Then she saw what she had tripped over - Samantha's decapitated head staring blankly up at her. She began to scream. "HEEEELLLLPPPP MEEEEEE!!!!" She shouted through the barn, hoping that someone heard her. Tina got up, repeating, "Help me!" repeatedly as she kicked up hay while running out of the barn. She ran in desperation to where the deputies had parked. "Help me, please. I think... I think he's here," Tina said, catching her breath.

Her eyes widened in horror as she took in the gruesome scene before her. She recognized the two deputies who had accompanied her to the party, but their names eluded her at that moment. One had a deep, black gash in his throat, and a shard of bone jutted out from his eye socket. The other deputy lay motionless opposite the patrol car; his mouth grotesquely ripped open as if in a silent, never-ending scream. The sight was too much for Tina to bear. Her legs began to buckle as she took slow, unsteady steps backward, trying to distance herself from the grotesque scene. The stench of death filled her nostrils, and nausea came to the forefront. She doubled over, retching uncontrollably until she vomited on the ground, adding to the dreadful scene before her.

"TINAAAAAA!!!!"

She heard her name being screamed in the distance. Her veins were doing their best to keep up with her heart working hard. Her emotions were swirling in a chaotic storm. Confusion and anguish crashed against the shores of her consciousness. Jamie shouldn't have been out of the fucking hospital. And she shouldn't, no, couldn't have been out here.

"TINA!!!" She heard again as the cry of her name reached her ears.

Tina's body trembled with hope and fear. She turned, eyes scanning the distance, desperately seeking a glimmer of familiarity. And then she saw Jamie and Billy racing towards her urgently. It was a bittersweet moment, a collision of joy and disbelief. The tragedy of losing her friends lingered, but damn, she was happy to see Jamie, even if she shouldn't have been here. Tears welled up in Tina's eyes, blurring her vision as she struggled to comprehend the surreal scene unfolding before her. The feeling of loss that had settled deep within Tina's soul now rose to the surface, overwhelming her senses. The image of her best friends being brutally taken away from her played on a loop in her mind, each frame etching itself deeper into her memory. The wounds were still raw, the pain still fresh, but the presence of Jamie helped ease the heartache.

"TINAAAAAAA!" The desperate cry pierced the air again, and Tina's heart leaped as Jamie and Billy raced up the farmhouse driveway. "BABY!!!" Tina's voice trembled with joy and disbelief.

*Why was Jamie here?* The question burned in her mind again, but the warmth of their reunion was all that mattered. As they sprinted towards each other with their arms flung wide, they collided in a fierce embrace, holding on as if their lives depended on it. Tina finally asked, "What are you *doing* here?"

But before Jamie could answer, her eyes widened in terror as she spotted him. The nightmare that haunted their lives - her uncle, Michael Myers, looming ominously behind Tina. "RUN!" Jamie screamed, her voice cracking with raw fear.

Tina, Jamie, and Billy sprinted with wild abandon toward the dense, foreboding forest, their feet pounding against the hard-packed earth, each step sending plumes of dust swirling into the air. The silvery moonlight cast shadows on the gnarled trees that loomed before them, providing the only illumination source in the otherwise pitch-black night. As they risked a fleeting glance over their shoulders, their hearts hammering in their chests like a relentless drumbeat, they caught sight of Michael. He stood menacingly beside the police cruiser, his hands white-knuckled with rage and clutched the collar of one of the deputies, whose lifeless body slumped in the driver's seat. With a display of brute strength, Michael yanked the limp form from the vehicle and tossed it aside like a rag doll. The sickening thud of the body hitting the ground was audible from the bedroom it fell from. Wasting not a moment, Michael leaped into the driver's seat of the cruiser, the engine roaring to life with a deafening growl that seemed to shake the earth beneath their feet. The sound rolled through the desolate landscape, startling birds from their roosts and sending them flapping into the night sky, their panicked cries joining the terror that had overtaken the once-peaceful night.

The engine's sinister growl filled the air, causing Tina's eyes to widen in sheer terror, her heart ramming against her rib cage like a caged animal. She exchanged frantic glances with Jamie and Billy, the fear in their eyes mirroring her own, as they realized they were trapped between Michael in the cruiser and the dark, endless woods. The tangled mass of trees seemed

to call out to them, urging them to seek refuge within their shadowy depths. "For the love of god, you two need to get out of here. NOW! Jamie, I am so sorry I didn't stay with you today, but now you have to go. Run!" Tina's voice trembled as she waved frantically toward the cruiser, praying that Michael would halt his relentless pursuit of Jamie. But Michael showed no signs of stopping; instead, the car inched closer and closer to Jamie. A predator stalking its hopeless prey.

Tina's heart plummeted as the horrifying realization dawned on her: Michael had deliberately lured Jamie out into the open, making her an easy and vulnerable target. "RUN, JAMIE!!!" she screamed, her voice cracking with desperation.

Feeling utterly helpless, Tina let out another anguished cry, urging Jamie to flee for her life. Billy, too, sprinted toward Tina, hoping they could escape the nightmare together. But their flight was short-lived as Michael swerved the car to avoid a fallen tree and, in doing so, collided with Billy, sending him hurtling through the air. Tina watched in abject horror as Billy landed with a crunch, and the car sped away, closing in on Jamie with each passing second. The cruiser's engine roared like a ferocious beast, drowning out all other sounds as it pursued Jamie with homicidal, single-minded determination. Its headlights blazed like the eyes of a ravenous animal, bearing down on Jamie with terrifying speed.

Jamie had been running for what felt like an eternity; her pulse thundered in her ears as she desperately sought to elude her uncle's relentless pursuit. She knew he wouldn't stop until he caught her, and her options dwindled. As she darted through the forest, she spotted a large stump in her path. It was a risky move, but Jamie knew it might be her only chance to stop her uncle's pursuit.



With a desperate leap, she cleared the stump and crouched down, watching as the car continued after her. The engine's roar grew louder, getting closer and closer. Then it hit. Hard. As the car collided with the stump, there was a thunderous smash, and Jamie heard the crushing sound of metal bending and snapping. A jagged piece of the car flew off and cut open her cheek, sending searing pain through her face.

Jamie felt a sharp pain in her leg as she struggled to rise. Glancing down, she saw a splinter of wood embedded in her flesh. Though not life-threatening, the injury hindered her movement, forcing her to limp away from the wreckage. The heat from the flames licked at her skin, making it feel as if it were ablaze.

Turning back, she saw the car fully engulfed in a raging inferno. The heat was suffocating, and Jamie could feel the sweat pouring down her face. She knew the car could explode at any moment, and she had to distance herself from the fiery tomb. As she stumbled over fallen branches, she caught sight of the car erupting in a blindingly bright explosion.

The force of the blast knocked her off her feet, and Jamie felt the shock wave ripple through her body. For a moment, she was disoriented, unsure of her surroundings or what had just happened. Then she saw him. He was emerging from the flames like a vengeful demon from hell. His workman suit was singed but intact, and the fire almost danced around him. It was an infernal aura that seemed to envelop him.

Terror gripped Jamie as she watched her uncle, his knife glinting menacingly in the flickering light of the flames. She knew there was no escape, no chance of evading his wrath. Jamie's pulse quickened as he advanced toward her, and her palms grew slick and sweaty. She braced herself, knowing

this was the end. Her mind raced, filled with the dreams and aspirations she'd once held dear. With a resigned sigh, Jamie closed her eyes, thought of Rachel, and awaited the inevitable.

*No more, I can't do this anymore. Just let me die. Let me die.* *KILL ME*, Jamie thought to herself. She crawled into the fetal position and yelled, "JUST DO IT! END IT!"

A sudden movement caught his attention as Michael raised the knife above Jamie. Tina Williams had flung herself before him, intercepting the lethal blade destined for Jamie's heart. Michael grabbed Tina by the waist as she fell, lifting her and driving the knife into *her* heart. In a moment of selflessness, Tina had made the ultimate sacrifice for Jamie, giving her own life to save another.

With a cold detachment, Michael removed the knife from Tina's lifeless body and let her fall to the ground. With what little time she had left, Tina turned her gaze to Jamie, who remained crouched in terror. In a weak voice, she said, "I love you. Now run." Jamie's wide eyes locked onto Tina's as her eyelids descended, sealing her gaze forever. A heavy cloak of anguish fell upon Jamie's shoulders as the colossal magnitude of Tina's unfathomable self-sacrifice crashed upon her, engulfing her in a single shattering instant.

Shaken and disoriented, Jamie slowly picked herself up from the ground, feeling the weight of what Tina had done bearing down upon her. She ran towards Billy, who was slowly regaining consciousness, urging him to come with her. "Come on," she said urgently. "We need to go."

"I d...d...d... on't think I c...c...an m...m...m..ove." Billy stuttered.

Jamie did her best to help Billy to his feet. Jamie's thoughts kept returning to Tina as they limped together through the

darkness. She realized then that she had never truly understood the meaning of sacrifice. Tina had given her life to save Jamie and knew she could never repay that debt. Jamie and Billy, tired and limping, continued to make their way through the dense forest back to the Tower farm.

Sirens began sounding in the distance, and Jamie and Billy exchanged a look of relief as they grew louder. For a moment, they allowed themselves to believe that the nightmare was finally over. But as they searched their surroundings for any sign of Michael, a flicker of fear crept back into their minds. What if this isn't over? They heard a familiar voice calling them through the woods just as they were beginning to despair. "Jamie! Where are you?! Billy! Where are you?!" It was Doctor Loomis.

Jamie and Billy rushed toward the sound of his voice, their hearts pounding with a mixture of fear and hope. As they emerged from the dense forest, they saw Doctor Loomis standing beside his car with his cane. His face was etched with concern and panic.

\* \* \*

Jamie sat huddled in the back of the cramped EMT van, her trembling body wrapped tightly in a warm blanket. The frigid air of the night seeped through the vehicle's windows, intensifying the shaking of her already shivering body. Yet, the physical coldness paled in comparison to the intense and furious grip that clenched her heart. The scene of her uncle's knife plunging into Tina's heart kept playing in her mind. The trauma had unleashed a storm within her, drowning her in a sea of emotions that surged and roared, threatening to spill out

in a stream of tears. Then, in the chaos of confusion, fear, and despair, the relentless flames of anger raged most fiercely. Jamie stared into the void in the depths of her pain, her mind made up with what she had to do next. This night would mark the end, regardless of the outcome. Whether she brought Michael Myers to his final demise or she was killed in her attempt, Jamie was ready and willing to end the madness that had seized her life.

As Sam's distant footsteps resonated through the lonely gravel road, Jamie's gaze fixated on his approaching figure. His face bore the unmistakable signs of exhaustion, etched upon his visage like a map of weariness. Sunken eyes, plagued by dark circles, revealed a severe lack of sleep. Yet, beneath the exhaustion, a flicker of madness danced in his eyes, a feature that seemed to have only grown since their last encounter. It was as though Sam had crossed a threshold from which there was no return. She could sense the mounting tension within him; her nerves wound tightly as she braced herself for the impending confrontation. When Sam drew nearer, his voice uttered a low growl, a sound that seemed to come from within her. "Are you finally willing to help me stop this, Jamie?" he demanded, his words dripping with stoic desperation.

As Jamie locked eyes with Sam, she realized that the weight of his tormented past was eating away at him. She recognized his exhaustion, perhaps surpassing her own. But behind the weariness, a pure determination radiated from his gaze. It was impossible to ignore. Slowly, Jamie turned her head to face Sam, her gaze intent. She nodded, her gesture conveying her agreement and readiness to stand by his side. "Can you kill him?" she asked, her voice intense and severe, almost disarmingly mature.

"I believe I can," Sam replied, his tone laced with grim motivation.

"Then I believe I can help you," Jamie affirmed.

"Good. I'll have you get out of this van and into the back of Sheriff Meeker's car. I'll join you shortly."

\* \* \*

As Sam cautiously tread along the perimeter of the horrific crime scene, a thick blanket of fog coiled around his ankles, obscuring his vision and shrouding the night. An unease settled over him, prickling his skin and causing his senses to heighten. It was as if an invisible presence were near, the weight of an ancient history unfolding in the depths of the night. Deep within Sam's core, a flicker of recognition sparked a primal insight that he and the lurking figure in the shadows shared a twisted, entangled past. Dr. Samuel Loomis and Michael Myers, forever linked by a macabre dance in death's shadow, found themselves locked in an unspoken confrontation within the fog. Though strained through the mist, their eyes met with an intensity that transcended understanding, an unspoken communion between two souls intertwined in an inexorable fate.

Michael's silhouette materialized between the trees' looming sentinels, a hulking presence emerging from the void. The tendrils of fog rendered his features barely discernible. Yet, despite the veiled image, Sam knew with absolute certainty that their eyes had locked, two unyielding forces tethered to each other's gaze. The gravity of their shared history hung heavy in the air, a testament to the darkness that bound them, the abyss

lurking within their hearts.

A peculiar energy crackled between them, electric with the promise of mutual destruction. It was a paradoxical cocktail of terror and exhilaration that coursed through Sam's veins, leaving him both paralyzed and encouraged in the face of unfathomable evil. At this moment, he became acutely aware that their destinies were indeed intertwined, a twisted duality where victim and villain blurred into a singular entity. But Sam also was certain now that Michael, this embodiment of malice, was merely a pawn in a grander scheme, a puppet manipulated by the insidious cult of Thorn. A surge of conviction grew within Sam's chest as he realized the true source of the madness that had plagued Haddonfield for far too long. The shadows had whispered their secrets, revealing the covert machinations of the cult, pulling the strings of Michael's existence. Sam resolved to expose the puppeteers behind the mask, for he knew that the cycle of violence was only broken by severing their hold.

Yet, in this veil of fog and dread, Sam understood that he had to make one last desperate attempt to reach the tormented soul before him. He drew a steadying breath, summoning every ounce of his courage, and called out into the abyss, his words laced with a desperate plea for sanity.

"Michael, hear me! Listen to my words! This relentless fury. This rage that consumes you, Michael. The rage that drives you. If you want it gone, then listen to me now!" The echoes of his voice bounced in and around the thick fog, a spectral chorus urging Michael to hear him.

"It will destroy you one day, too, Michael. You think if you kill them all, it will go away. It won't! You have to fight it! In the place where it's strongest. WHERE IT ALL BEGAN! If you want to get rid of this rage, Michael, go home. GO HOME! To

your house! I shall be there, waiting for you, and you'll find her waiting for you." As Sam's impassioned plea hung in the air, Michael's towering figure turned, a phantom vanishing into the enshrouding mist.

The cold breath of the night brushed against Sam's face, carrying a chill that mirrored the intensity of their impending encounter. Sam turned and returned to Jamie into the darkest, coldest Halloween night Sam had ever felt.

## Chapter 8

Sam and Jamie huddled together in the cramped back seat of Sheriff Ben Meeker's SUV, the vehicle hurtling through the pitch-black, serpentine streets of Haddonfield. The piercing wail of the emergency siren cut through the night, and the strobbing red and blue lights cast a glow on the surrounding buildings, casting shadows that seemed to dance. Sam turned to Jamie, his eyes burning with a fierce intensity that belied his harboring fear. He thoroughly explained his plan, his words tumbling out in a quiet but rapid-fire torrent. He didn't want to let Meeker, sitting in the driver's seat, hear so much as a whisper. His hands moved in animated gestures, painting a vivid, almost cinematic picture of the harrowing events that were about to unfold. Jamie's gaze drifted to the window as Sam spoke, her eyes fixed on the darkened streets that raced by in a blur. Her mind churned with a maelstrom of emotions: fear, anger, and uncertainty, all vying for dominance. She knew that what Sam was proposing was close to insane, a high-stakes gamble that could very well end with both of them lying cold and lifeless on the unforgiving ground. Maybe the old man had finally lost his fucking mind. But even so, she couldn't deny that his plan had a certain twisted



logic. They had tried to run, to hide, but Michael had always found them relentless and unstoppable. Perhaps the only way to break free from his iron grip was to face the monster head-on and turn the tables in their favor.

Despite her trepidation, Jamie nodded in agreement to Sam's plan. As she did so, a strange sense of relief came over her, as if she had finally begun to wrestle control of her fate from the hands of the psychopath who had haunted her every moment. Sam's plan was as simple as it was terrifying: he was going to use her as bait. To lure her uncle to his own house and ensnare him in a deadly trap. "Are you ready?" Sam asked, his voice steady despite the gravity of the situation.

Sam's plan weighed heavily on Jamie's mind as they drove towards Michael's house. She couldn't shake the fear that crept up inside her. Memories of her mother, Laurie, flooded her thoughts. She remembered Laurie's stories about Michael, how he had stalked and attacked her years before Jamie was born. She was six years old when her mother told her the essential details of what had happened, but Jamie understood that Laurie had fought back. That she was determined not to be a victim. And when Jamie's father had filed for divorce, citing Laurie's supposed mental instability as a reason for him to gain custody, Laurie had fought tooth and nail to keep her daughter. She had been winning the battle against her alcoholism, too, until fate dealt the final blow with a fatal car crash.

Jamie knew she had to be strong like her mother, but she didn't feel strong. She nodded to Sam's question, hoping to pull herself together enough to make it through. Sam's plan was risky, but Jamie couldn't see any other way out of this nightmare. She looked out the window, feeling despair fill her. The world outside seemed so bleak, so colorless. She wished she could

wake up and find that this had all been a bad dream. But she knew this was her reality and had to face it. "Are you sure?" Sam pressed her.

Jamie nodded.

Sam concocted a more complex plan than luring Michael to the house; its intricacies ran deeper than that. Recognizing the necessity for a diversion, Sam devised a strategy that involved Jamie feigning a vision of the Children's Hospital. This fabrication was intended to draw the attention of the highly alert police squad firmly stationed outside the Myers' house. He wanted as few people in or around the house as possible. Sam was acutely aware of Michael's uncanny instincts as a predator, capable of detecting a trap quickly. Any inkling of their scheme that caught his attention could result in dire consequences, potentially leading to the brutal slaughter of the entire police force or Michael simply refusing to take the bait, prolonging this torment indefinitely. Thus, Jamie became the crucial linchpin of their audacious plan. Despite the plan's apparent risks, their desperate situation forced them to take charge and find a solution, even if it meant making sacrifices. The weight of their clandestine operation rested solely on Sam's shoulders, as Sheriff Meeker remained essentially ignorant of their scheme. However, the ramifications of exposure were far-reaching and possibly dangerous, especially for Jamie. Unmasking their efforts could strip Sam of his medical license and may inevitably land him in prison. The stakes loomed ominously overhead, yet Sam refused to yield to Michael's wrath. The psychopath's victory was untenable, for Jamie's life could be at stake.

\* \* \*

45 Lampkin Lane, Haddonfield, Illinois.

A shiver of fear crawled up his spine as Doctor Samuel Loomis approached the home for the second time that day. Despite its decrepit appearance, an intangible, ominous aura set it apart from the other houses on the block. It wasn't just the overgrown weeds and structural defects but something far more sinister. Perhaps the ghosts of Michael's past victims lingered in the air. Every rational fiber of Loomis's discernment rejected the notion of supernatural forces at play, dismissing the notion of ghosts as mere superstition. Yet, in the face of this abominable dwelling, he couldn't deny the presence of something that defied explanation. It was so palpable and tangible that it crawled beneath the surface of reality itself, coiling in the shadows, waiting to strike with an unholy vengeance.

It was Evil.

Stepping across the threshold, Jamie took a moment to survey her surroundings, her youthful eyes scanning the interior. To her surprise, she questioned the majority opinion of the townsfolk who deemed the house a source of fright. True, the floorboards groaned beneath her weight, and a thick layer of dust coated every surface, but to Jamie, it was just a house. In its heyday, she imagined it as a charming middle-class home full of warmth and life. The passage of time and its history had cast a dark shadow upon its once-vibrant existence, but it was still just a house to Jamie.

The Haddonfield Police Department had gone to great lengths to safeguard Jamie. Powerful floodlights adorned the exterior, cutting through the inky blackness of the night and illuminating the home that had been without electricity

since 1970. Five officers stood sentry outside, their vigilant gazes piercing the darkness, searching for the slightest hint of movement. Inside the house, three more officers maintained their posts, two stationed on the ground floor and one on the upper level, their watchful eyes fixed on Jamie and Doctor Loomis. Their weapons remained primed and loaded, their nerves taut as bowstrings. Jamie shuddered when she thought that soon, all of these cops would be nowhere in sight to protect her. She kept thinking that maybe this idea would get her killed after all. She hoped Dr. Loomis' plan was going to work.

"Jamie," Sam whispered, his voice laden with an authoritative tone, "come with me."

He gently took her hand and guided her up the decaying staircase. Each step creaked, resonating through the silent house. Jamie took in the disrepair that plagued every inch of the residence as they ascended. The peeling wallpaper hung like tattered remnants of forgotten dreams, a musty odor permeated the stale air, and the floorboards groaned in protest with each deliberate step. It was a place that exuded a sense of desolation and decay that practically painted the darkness that had plagued its walls. Reaching the upper floor, Sam led Jamie into one of the dark and empty rooms. The absence of furnishings was starkly apparent, save for an ancient box spring, a stained mattress, and a weathered dresser with a cracked mirror. It was a space frozen in time, untouched by human presence for what seemed like an eternity. Jamie wondered how long it had been since anyone had slept on that dark-stained mattress and weathered bed.

"What do you want me to do?" Jamie inquired, her voice barely above a whisper.

Sam took a deep breath. He knew the truth needed to be

revealed, however painful it may be. The words tumbled from his lips, painting a grim picture of the room's dark past. "Do you know who this room belonged to?" he asked, a somber tone coloring his voice.

Jamie shook her head, her eyes wide with curiosity and apprehension.

"This room," Sam began, his voice heavy, "belonged to your aunt, Judith Myers. It was here, in this very room, that Michael took her life in 1964. It was his first act of murder. He was six years old." The gravity of the words hung in the air.

Sam's voice lowered as if sharing a forbidden secret. "In his twisted fantasy, Michael yearns to recreate that night whenever he returns home. It is the foundation of his obsession, his deranged, twisted desire. Our plan revolves around exploiting this fixation, offering him the illusion of completing that horrific night. If we can manipulate his fantasy, we gain an advantage, a chance to snare him within our grasp."

Jamie's gaze met Sam's, resignation and determination flickering within her young eyes. It was a look that silently conveyed the unspoken truth: she had no choice but to comply.

"Come, sit," Sam beckoned, patting the seat in front of the cracked mirror dresser. A cloud of dust erupted into the air, suspended for a fleeting moment. Jamie cautiously approached, her fingers brushing against the handle of a brush atop the dresser.

"I want you to brush your hair in front of the mirror," Sam instructed, his voice calm now. "That is all I want you to do."

Drawing closer, Sam leaned in, his words barely a whisper in Jamie's ear. "In fifteen minutes, I want you to tell us that you see something at the hospital, just as I told you."

Jamie turned to look into Sam's good eye and nodded.

Deputy Charlie Block had dedicated twenty years of his life to law enforcement. The first fifteen years were spent as a detective for the Chicago Police Department, where he earned a reputation as a skilled investigator with a talent for solving even the most complex cases. However, after his wife Myra expressed her desire to leave the increasingly violent city, they decided to move to Haddonfield, where they hoped for a safer, quieter life.

Despite his impressive background, Charlie was unable to secure a detective position within the Haddonfield Police Department due to a lack of available positions. However, after speaking with Sheriff Leigh Brackett for several weeks and receiving a glowing recommendation from the Chicago PD, Charlie was offered a job as a deputy at a detective's pay rate. At the time, the local government was in a surplus, and they could afford to offer Charlie the higher salary. Naturally, Charlie was more than happy to accept the job.

While the job itself was not particularly challenging, a side effect came with it: a slow but steady weight gain. Over his five years as a deputy, Charlie had gained over fifteen pounds, thanks in no small part to the donuts he consumed at the Haddonfield PD office and Myra's newfound love of home cooking shows.

Charlie was fully aware of the Myers case from 1964 and 1978. Most of Illinois was, but Charlie had taken a keen interest in it. When Myra and Charlie discussed where to move, Charlie was more than ready to say yes to Haddonfield. In 1988, when the manhunt for Michael Myers began, Charlie was - unlike the rest

of the Police Department - rather giddy about the prospect of bringing him to justice. This had put the newly minted Sheriff Ben Meeker on alert. Sheriff Meeker didn't have time for serial killer fanboys. But Charlie was a detective at heart, and he had done the most professional and thorough job he could have done that night.

Sitting in the upstairs bedroom of the old Myers' place, Charlie felt a wave of frustration wash over him. He had been so excited to be part of the team that would finally bring Michael Myers to justice, but things hadn't gone as planned. Charlie grew to dislike Dr. Loomis, the psychiatrist who seemed to have a god complex and had now put everyone in danger by using Jamie as bait. Charlie had read newspaper clippings about Loomis before, and he had seemed like a wise old man and knowledgeable about Myers, but now that he had met the man in person, Charlie felt differently. It bothered him that Loomis, who was not an officer of the law, had so much power over the situation. When Charlie questioned Sheriff Meeker about Loomis's role, the response was vague and unhelpful. Meeker told Charlie to do what he was told and trust that Loomis knew what he was doing. But Charlie didn't like being kept in the dark, especially when it came to the safety of a little girl like Jamie.

As Charlie sat in the dusty old room, he thought about how things had gone so wrong the year before. He had been part of the team that had chased Myers through the streets of Haddonfield, hoping to end his reign of terror. Charlie had helped rein in the out-of-control mob who had assumed they could take Myers alone; he had found out where the stupid fucking rednecks were going and was the one to arrest Earl Haggarity after he shot and killed Ted Hollister, thinking it was

Myers (the manslaughter charge put the good ol' boy, Earl, away for five years). In all reality, the police should have made damn sure they killed Myers, but of course, Myers had managed to slip away, and now they were faced with yet another manhunt for the same maniac. Charlie felt like they were always one step behind, and he grew increasingly frustrated with each passing minute. Today, however, Charlie thought he was three steps ahead of everyone else, having lived through last year.

Jamie sat motionless, staring blankly at her reflection in the mirror as she absently brushed her long, tangled hair, following Dr. Loomis's instructions. Charlie noticed the girl's heavy breathing and the dripping of sweat on her forehead. It was apparent that Jamie was not just physically exhausted but also mentally drained from the ordeal she had been through. As she continued to brush her hair, the brush suddenly slipped from her hand and clattered to the floor, causing a loud thud as it landed. Jamie let out a small whimper as she recoiled in fear, her eyes darting around the room as if looking for an escape. Charlie knew then that he had to act fast to help this traumatized little girl.

"B...B... B... Billlllyyyy!!!" She stuttered out. Charlie walked over to Jamie quickly and kneeled to her level.

"What's wrong, Jamie?"

"It's Billy! He's at the hospital!" Jamie replied, exasperated.

"We know Billy is at the hospital, sweetheart. He's safe." Charlie replied.

"NO! NOT BILLY!" Jamie looked into Charlie's eyes and screamed, "MY UNCLE!!!"

"Now, how do you know that?" Charlie asked softly, not believing Jamie whatsoever.

Jamie looked at him with a look that said, *"do you think I'm*



*fucking stupid”?*

The bedroom door creaked open, and Sam entered the bedroom, radio in hand. He looked pissed off. He brought the radio to his mouth, clicked the TALK button, and said, “Meeker, he’s at the clinic. Hurry. NOW.”

A moment later, the radio beeped.

“Okay, boys, you heard him. Move it. Eddie, stay put and keep an eye open.”

\* \* \*

With his patience at its breaking point, Deputy Bloch marched purposefully toward Jamie, his footsteps resounding through the dimly lit room. Concern etched on his face, he gently placed a reassuring hand on her quivering back and lowered himself to her level, his knees pressing against the cold, hard floor. “Alright, young lady,” he said in a voice that was like an oasis of calm in the chaos, “I think it’s time for us to leave. You’ve been through more than enough for one night.”

Jamie turned toward Deputy Bloch, her eyes illuminating a pained expression. A trembling nod affirmed her agreement, acknowledging the necessity of leaving this nightmare behind, but Jamie knew that would never happen. As they walked toward the bedroom door to go, a sudden obstruction materialized in their path. Doctor Loomis walked in through the door and forcefully swung it shut behind him; the thud shook the room. A malicious click was audible as Sam locked the door with a skeleton key. Deputy Bloch spun around, his previously sympathetic countenance now contorted with

anger and disbelief. His voice, infused with rising frustration, confronted Loomis. "What the hell do you think you're doing, Dr. Loomis?" he demanded, his words dripping with righteous indignation.

Standing firm and unwavering, Sam responded with an eerie calmness that sent shivers down Deputy Bloch's spine. The intensity in Sam's eyes pierced through his very being as if the unhinged madness within him had finally seeped into his soul. "That girl," Sam uttered with chilling determination, "isn't going anywhere."

Before Deputy Bloch could retort, his radio abruptly crackled to life, the unexpected sound piercing the tense atmosphere. A voice emerged from the device. "This is Eddie," the voice announced, "we've got a car that just pulled up behind me out front. I think it's one of ours, but I can't tell."

\* \* \*

Deputy Eddie Hansen's heart raced as he anxiously peered out his police cruiser's window, his breath fogging the glass. The dim glow of the streetlights revealed a towering figure emerging from the shadowy vehicle parked behind him. The imposing figure approached with slow, measured steps, each step rang out ominously in the quiet night. Eddie's heart pounded like a tribal drum, his thoughts racing to his loving wife and their newborn baby waiting for him at home. As the figure drew closer, a sinking dread filled Eddie's stomach, and he recognized who it was. It was Michael Myers. "Oh, shit! SHIT!" He yelled, his voice cracking with terror.

In a desperate bid to escape, Eddie's trembling hands fumbled with the keys, finally inserting them into the ignition. He twisted them with all his might, but Michael's hand crashed through the driver's side window before the engine could even sputter, showering Eddie with shards of glass and shattering his hope of getting away unscathed. Michael reached in and quickly grabbed the Deputy's right ear, yanking it with brutal force. After five agonizing tugs, Eddie's ear tore open, blood and cartilage cascading down his neck. Michael's fingers dug into Eddie's exposed wound, pulling back the skin to reveal the bone and tissue beneath. The pain was immense, unbearable, and the damage wasn't just severe - it was catastrophic. Michael released his grip momentarily, and Eddie felt the pulsating pain intensify. Instinctively, he reached up to cover the wound, only to discover that his ear was gone, replaced by a searing, throbbing hole leaking blood.

Michael seized the back of Eddie's head and slammed his face repeatedly against the steering wheel, the car horn blaring every time it hit. Eddie clutched the radio microphone and started to swing, desperately trying to strike Michael with it. Eddie's face was unrecognizable after twenty seconds and countless brutal impacts, his will to struggle extinguished. Yet, somehow, he remained conscious. Michael turned and left, leaving Eddie slumped in the driver's seat of his police cruiser. With his right eye, he stared at his lap; his left eye had fallen out of its socket during the assault and now dangled, bouncing against the remnants of his cheek. He saw his face looking back at him, a grotesque reflection of the horror he had just endured.

Summoning the last of his strength, Eddie managed to lift his head and gaze into the rear view mirror. The sight that greeted him was a macabre vision of beetroot red muscle tissue, blood

oozing onto his uniform. The only skin that remained was on his left ear. Ten minutes later, Eddie took his service weapon from his utility belt and, with a final, anguished breath, shot himself in the head before he could bleed to death.

\* \* \*

Charlie's voice trembled with fear and intensity as he officially reached his breaking point. "Right, that's it," he declared with a firm resolve, his voice carrying the weight of a man who doesn't take shit from anybody.

"We're getting the fuck out of here. NOW! I'm calling Meeker!" With a swift motion, he reached for the radio secured to his belt, his hand trembling as he fumbled with the device's controls.

However, Sam's actions became a blur of movement before Charlie could even make contact with the radio's dial. In a sudden burst of agility, Sam lunged forward and snatched the handheld radio from Charlie's grasp, his fingers wrapping around it like a vice. With a force that seemed disproportionate to his frame, Sam brought the radio crashing against the wall. The impact shook the room, and shattered plastic and metal hit the floor. Each strike against the wall showered the room in a cascade of electric sparks, casting a blue glow that danced across their faces, leaving Charlie frozen in utter astonishment and disbelief. Rage consumed Charlie's features as he finally found his voice. "You crazy son of a bitch!" he bellowed, his voice laced with anger and desperation. "What the hell have you done?!"

Seemingly unaffected by Charlie's outburst, Sam slowly withdrew a gleaming stainless steel M1911 from the depths of his beige trench coat, sending Charlie backing up against the bedroom wall. Sam pointed the weapon directly at Charlie with a steely gaze and a voice that carried an undercurrent of urgency. "CHARLIE!" he exclaimed, his tone a mixture of command and plea. "Charlie... Charlie... Michael Myers is outside. And he will find his way in here. Stay with the little girl. Please?"

Charlie's resolve crumbled in the face of Sam's actions. Slowly, he approached Jamie, and his voice croaked as he sought to calm her fears. "Don't worry about this, darlin'."

Sam's lips curled into a sinister smile. His intentions were shrouded in mystery. Turning away, he confidently approached the door with the skeleton key in his hand and reached for the lock. He unlocked the door with a turn and a click, and a sense of finality hung in the air. As he closed the door behind him, Sam turned, his eyes fixated on the portal that now separated him from the others. Deep down, Sam was acutely aware that his actions violated countless rules, both in law and medicine. Yet, in their dire circumstances, he found himself backed into a corner devoid of viable alternatives. Sam wasn't crazy. Just out of options.

\* \* \*

Sam turned the key, and a resolute click was felt through his fingers. His trembling hand extracted the key from the stubborn lock, the worn metal resisting his efforts. While

not proud of what he'd done, he was under the assumption that Jamie would be safe for the time being. But he had to intervene before Michael could make his way upstairs. He couldn't risk allowing her to leave, either. She remained the bait in this dangerous game. As he cautiously distanced himself from the dark second-floor hallway, his footsteps merged with the silence. The creaking stairs beckoned him downward, each step another reminder of the years that had elapsed, marked by failure after failure and the relentless pursuit of evil. Dr. Loomis had devoted a staggering twenty-six years of his life to Michael Myers. Every encounter, every twisted act of violence, had left a tortuous mark on their shared history.

For all those agonizing years, Sam had tenaciously endeavored to breach the impenetrable fortress of Michael's broken psyche. Desperation fueled his relentless efforts, driven by a sliver of hope concealed beneath the deep layers of darkness. Yet, with the passing of each year, that hope grew increasingly elusive, slipping through his fingers like grains of sand. Within the first five years of their dance with the devil, Sam's once-bright optimism eroded under the weight of his patient's disturbing transformation. Michael's first killing plunged Michael into the depths of catatonia. It was as if the shock waves of his action had shattered his mind, reducing him to an empty vessel devoid of volition. His patient morphed into a silent, docile, obedient dummy, existing merely to consume sustenance and fulfill basic commands, like a well-trained but stupid dog.

In the wake of Sam's sixth year of tending to Michael, the foundations of his belief in Michael's catatonic state were broken when Michael unleashed a torrent of violence, mercilessly snuffing out the life of another innocent child within

the suffocating confines of Smith's Grove. The staff, hesitant to confront the monstrous truth that only Sam seemed to believe, hastily wove a flimsy veil of denial over the horrific act. They postulated that the boy had tragically taken his own life, his wrists meeting the sharp edge of the metal dining room table. This explanation led to the expulsion of all metallic furniture from the institution, replaced by the safety of soft plastics.

However, Sam's conviction endured in the haze of denial surrounding the hospital staff and administration. He alone peered into the depths of Michael's violence and tried to understand the grotesque theater of death orchestrated by his patient's hands. Sam devoted his entire existence to the sacred duty of preventing Michael from claiming another innocent life. But he failed horrifically. On Halloween night in 1978, Michael slaughtered seventeen innocent people. In the fallout, the people of Haddonfield and his colleagues blamed Sam and began regarding him as just as insane as his patient. Sam took that to heart, slowly becoming utterly obsessed with Michael and not letting him go.

In the aftermath of the horrifying events that unfolded in 1978, Sam's desperate attempt to bring an end to Michael's reign of terror left Michael lying motionless in a coma. Filled with a conviction of the monster's perpetual danger, Sam pleaded fervently with doctors and authorities to get them to acknowledge the dormant threat within the comatose shell. It was an uphill battle, a clash against bureaucratic resistance, but finally, the relentless persistence paid off. The powers that be, swayed by Sam's impassioned pleas (and his inability to shut the fuck up), relented to his demands. Michael's inert form was relocated to Ridgemont, a high-security facility built to contain the most dangerous and deranged of minds. Within

its fortified walls, Michael languished for ten long years, his dormant presence a constant reminder of the evil that once ravaged Haddonfield. The facade of safety offered Sam a bit of respite, a brief interlude where he could believe that the nightmare had been restrained.

In a gross display of incompetence, the motherfuckers in authority shifted their opinion once more. The capricious kings of ignorance and fiscal concerns entrusted with Michael's custody were confident that he would never wake up and that Michael had become an unwarranted burden on the taxpayer's wallet. So, they shipped him back to Smith's Grove. But destiny had other plans. In a violent eruption of malevolence, Michael shattered the chains of captivity. Halloween night of 1988 became etched in Haddonfield's tortured history as the monster embarked on a blood-soaked rampage, hunting relentlessly for his niece.

For Sam, this was an irreversible betrayal, a damning consequence of blind complacency and gross incompetence. Every ounce of his being recoiled against the revelation, the realization that the powers he had implored to heed his warnings had failed him, failed Jamie, and failed the countless innocent lives caught in Michael's merciless grip. In the face of this unimaginable devastation, Sam's resolve solidified, forged in the crucible of guilt and determination. He would not rest until Michael was stopped until the dark cloud of doom hovering over Jamie was banished forever. Sam knew no bounds, his every waking moment dedicated to ensuring that Michael's murderous reach would not extend further. And now, standing within the hallowed walls of the Myers' house, the very epicenter of the horrors that had unfolded years ago, Sam's purpose burned within him. He was the solitary guardian



against the encroaching darkness, ready to face evil and protect what little innocence remained.

But Sam was slowly but surely going mad.

Here he was, all these years after Judith Myers' murder, where it all began.

Chasing his white whale in the mouth of madness.

\* \* \*

Sam cautiously descended the decaying staircase, his heavy boots sinking into the worn, threadbare carpeting with each careful step. The stale, musty air hung oppressively around him, suffocating his senses. Every creak of the dilapidated floorboards sent an icy shiver down his spine, amplifying the deafening silence that enveloped the abandoned house. Gripping his pistol tightly, he found comfort in the cold, hardened metal, as if it were the only barrier between him and the relentless man in the mask who was lurking in the shadows. His palms were clammy with sweat, causing his grip to falter momentarily. Sam hastily wiped them on his tan trousers. With a voice quivering with fear and determination, he called out into the ominous silence, his words ricocheting off the peeling wallpaper and rotting floorboards, echoing his plea. "Michael, come out!" The name hung heavy in the air, infused with desperation, anger, and a trace of something else—a haunting sense of familiarity.

The house remained obstinately silent as if mocking his feeble attempts to coax his adversary out of hiding. Deep down, Sam knew too well that there would be no response. Michael would continue to elude him, just as he had always done. Yet, despite the futility, Sam's resolve remained steadfast. He would speak, even if Michael chose not to, or perhaps, could not. Michael could listen. That much he knew. Sam stepped into the kitchen. Once a place of warmth, the kitchen now stood as a haunting monument to a tragedy that had scarred Sam and Michael forever, as it was the same room where Michael picked up his first blade. Sam's voice erupted, shattering the silence like a thunderclap in a desolate landscape. "I KNOW WHY YOU'VE COME BACK!" His words reverberated through the lifeless walls.

Silence seized the space, broken only by the relentless pounding of Sam's heart in his chest, and a moment of breathless anticipation followed, the air thick with tension. Closing his eyes briefly, Sam sought to gather his strength. When he opened them again, he caught his reflection in the glimmering blades of the kitchen knives strewn across the counter. Summoning every ounce of courage, Sam drew in a shaky breath, fighting to steady his trembling voice. "You came back for her, didn't you?" The words escaped his lips, laden with accusation and sorrow.

"The girl is still alive, and you want to finish what you started." Sam began to feel unsteady, and he faltered. Seeking support, he leaned heavily against the worn kitchen counter.

A sudden, jarring noise reverberated through the stagnant air, causing Sam's heart to leap into his throat. The sound, like a heavy object crashing against the floor, shattered the suffocating silence, igniting a surge of adrenaline within him. Gripping

his pistol with renewed urgency, his knuckles turning white, he cautiously ventured out of the kitchen, his steps deliberate and measured. As he passed through the archway separating the rooms, he instinctively brushed away the cobwebs that clung to his face, their ethereal touch serving as a grim reminder of the forsaken state of the house. An unsettling sensation gripped Sam's senses as he moved further into the dimly lit living room. The place exuded a particularly cold ambiance that began to bother Sam on an elemental level. Beams of foggy light pierced through the cracks in the boarded-up windows, casting elongated, spectral shadows across the forgotten furniture, their ghostly dance transforming the room into a theatre stage set in hell. Time had suspended itself here, preserving the remnants of a bygone era. Dust-clad plastic covered the furniture, frozen in a perpetual state of abandonment. The couch stood against the wall in the living room. It was a silent witness to young love and shattered innocence, forever imprisoned in that night. Judith and her boyfriend kissed there a few moments before heading upstairs to make love. A few moments before Judith was stabbed to death by her six-year-old brother. Sam began to feel something as he surveyed the desolate room. His breath caught in his throat. Haunted. Was that it? Was that the feeling? The specters of the past seemed to manifest before his eyes, their presence seeping into his very being. He couldn't help but feel their unfinished stories, their restless souls casting a pall over the present.

In the murky depths of the living room, he saw him.

The Shape loomed like a ghostly entity, a towering figure cloaked in shadows. The darkness seemed to claim him, merging his silhouette with its own, rendering him a part

of the abyss. Gradually, Sam's eyes adjusted, revealing the menacing stature of Michael and the gleaming blade he tightly clenched. Despite the murderous impulses that emanated from him, Sam found himself irresistibly drawn closer, akin to a cautious approach towards an angry wasp nest, aware that even the slightest disturbance could provoke a catastrophic response. As Sam inched nearer, Michael's head cocked to the side, a flicker of comprehension momentarily illuminating his otherwise inscrutable features. A hushed tremor was audible in Sam's words as he spoke, his voice low and quiet, as though he feared awakening the dormant beast within Michael. "It's the little girl, isn't it?" The words hung in the air, a subtle hook skillfully baited to ensnare Michael's attention.

Sam discerned a flicker of a response, a glimpse of acknowledgment in Michael's gaze. It was an indication that his gamble had paid off. Michael had returned, drawn back by the prospect of finishing what he had started. Michael's grip on the knife loosened, his hardened features giving way to a flicker of vulnerability as he seemed to absorb Sam's words. The weight of his inner turmoil hung heavy in the air, their shared darkness intertwining in an unspoken understanding. As Sam spoke, his voice growing steadily more assured, he carefully selected his words, weaving a delicate web of deceit and calculated manipulation. Sam had no intention of helping his former patient. He intended to kill him. "She can stop the rage," he proclaimed, his tone filled with deceptive conviction. "I can take you to her. You need not suffer much longer."

Sam was acutely aware of the fear and anger within Michael's soul, the festering evil that had consumed him entirely. In that fleeting moment, a shard of compassion pierced Sam's resolve, but he swiftly dismissed it. This was not a quest for redemption

or salvation. Michael was irredeemable. His fate was sealed. “We are alone in your house, Michael,” Sam asserted. “You, me, and the girl. I’ve sent the bad men away.” His gaze dropped momentarily to the gleaming blade clutched tightly in Michael’s hand, the stark contrast between the whiteness of his knuckles and the crimson veins that pulsed beneath his skin.

Meeting Michael’s gaze head-on, Sam locked eyes with the embodiment of eternal darkness. Of pure evil. Panic flickered within Michael’s depths, an unsettling sight that gnawed at Sam’s consciousness. He sensed the uncertainty that swirled within his former patient. If Michael caught onto Sam’s ploy, they were fucked, and this would be over before it even began. “You won’t need... you won’t need this, Michael,” Sam whispered softly, his hand inching hesitantly towards the knife to disarm the monster before him.

In an instant, the world erupted into chaos. Michael’s hand lashed out with astonishing speed, the blade slashing through the air with deadly precision. The searing pain tore through Sam’s abdomen as the blade tore a crimson path through his flesh, splattering blood over Michael’s hand and staining Sam’s bright white shirt. Sam’s eyes widened in stoic shock as he realized the gravity of his miscalculation. His breath came in ragged gasps as he struggled to comprehend the magnitude of his mortality. Without pause, Michael discarded his weapon, its metallic thud a grotesque punctuation mark to the violence that had erupted. Gripping Sam by his coat, Michael yanked him violently towards the glass window on the north side of the living room. Sam’s head collided with the unforgiving surface. Ear-piercing sounds of shattering glass and searing pain engulfed his senses. Blood cascaded down his face, mingling with the sweat and tears that adorned his bruised

and battered features. Terror surged through Sam's veins; he cried in agony, unsure of the horrors his former patient had yet to unleash.

A sudden jerk pulled Sam away from the shattered window, the glass shards tearing mercilessly at his bald scalp. Michael's piercing gaze bore into Sam's anguished eyes, revealing a profound spectrum of emotions that defied comprehension. It wasn't rage that burned within Michael's depths, nor anger that fueled his actions. It was raw fear and sorrow. Sam's mind reeled, struggling to reconcile this with the monster before him. He looked at Michael's right wrist and briefly saw it. The symbol! And he realized just what it was. He was afraid of them! THORN!

With a brutal yank, Michael tore Sam away from his gaze, hurtling him across the living room with inhuman force. The plastic-clad couch offered little cushioning as Sam careened over its surface before crashing to the ground in a symphony of snapping bones and tortured cries. Agonizing pain radiated through Sam's broken body, each breath arduous. The room spun around him as he fought to regain his bearings. The sharp crackle of his fractured ribs was audible. Blood seeped steadily from his wounded abdomen. The urgency of his mission surged within him, propelling him forward even as his strength waned. Thoughts of Jamie consumed his mind, her innocence fueling his determination to stay alive. He couldn't bear the thought of failing her, of allowing Michael to extinguish her light. Grief came in relentless waves, mingling with his pain as tears streamed down his blood-streaked face. In this moment of vulnerability, he confronted the weight of his shortcomings, haunted by the ghosts of those whose lives he couldn't save. Jamie's mother, her loved ones, and countless innocents; each

lost soul seared into his conscience, a mark of his failures.

A desperate plea burned in Sam's eyes as he clung to consciousness, unwilling to succumb to the encroaching darkness. He needed to stay vigilant to thwart Michael's malevolence. The unspoken plea hung in the air, an agonized prayer for strength, for deliverance. But his body betrayed him, its battered shell succumbing to the relentless onslaught. Sam's vision blurred, his consciousness slipping away like sand through clenched fists. In his pain and despair, he whispered a final vow to the universe, an oath forged in the crucible of sacrifice. "I won't let you win, Michael," he whispered, the words lost in the suffocating silence.

And then, as if surrendering to the inevitable, Sam's consciousness faded.

## Chapter 9

“J amie, get back by the window! NOW!”

They both could hear the intense, chaotic struggle that unfolded below their feet. Dr. Loomis was down, and Jamie’s psychopathic uncle was ascending the staircase with relentless determination. Each heavy footfall hit heavy and shook the ground, a sinister crescendo that sent the Deputy into overdrive—the pulse of fear and adrenaline beat in his ears. Sweat formed on Deputy Bloch’s forehead as he strained against the weight of the ancient vanity table, a formidable barricade meant to shield them from the threat that was almost up the stairs now. The room was cast in a dim light, the dusty air thick with tiny granules of ancient filth dancing chaotically about as Michael’s heavy strides shook the floorboards. With every muscle strained, he heaved the massive wooden structure, its once-polished surface now worn and faded. The antique mirror, tightly affixed to the vanity, trembled and rattled with the force of his desperate efforts. Then, with a heart-stopping crash, the mirror succumbed to the strain, shattering into a thousand glittering fragments. The room erupted in a dazzling spectacle of flying glass, the shards dancing through the air like sharp confetti. A thousand splintering reflections left a



kaleidoscope of dangerous beauty in its wake.

Taking cover behind the sturdy barrier, Bloch knelt with measured precision. His grip on his weapon was so tight that his knuckles were turning pale. His fingers tightened around the cool metal of his gun, its familiar weight a pleasant companion. With a quick motion, he checked the cylinder, ensuring that it held the full arsenal of potential salvation. Satisfied, he readied himself, aligning his aim with absolute focus. With one eye closed, his remaining eye locked onto the sights, Deputy Bloch steeled himself for the moment of truth. His breath slowed, and his heart rate steadied, drowned out by the resounding thud of blood rushing in his ears. He gripped the handle with resolve and prepared to unleash the storm of bullets as soon as Michael Myers entered his line of sight. The world outside this small bedroom faded away; the only reality that mattered was the impending confrontation with evil itself.

Jamie was huddled in the dimly lit corner of the room, her body trembling with fear. Her breaths came in ragged gasps, each more labored than the last. Her wide eyes were fixed on Deputy Bloch, who had his sights lined up for the inevitable. She knew, with chilling certainty, that no bullet could halt the monstrous advance of her uncle. Despite her fear, she deeply admired the Deputy's bravery in the face of certain death. However, she was painfully aware that Deputy Bloch's days were numbered, that November First would likely dawn without him.

As he approached the door, the old wooden floorboards creaked and groaned under his immense weight. And then it was dead quiet.

BOOM!

The door to the room seemed to shudder under the Shape's

vicious assault as if he was attempting to pulverize it with his bare hands. With each thunderous strike, the hinges creaked in protest, and the door frame groaned under the force. Suddenly, the door shattered inward with a deafening crash, sending shards of wood flying in all directions. Michael burst into the room with a speed that belied his hulking frame, moving with predatory agility. Deputy Bloch reacted with lightning-fast reflexes, his eyes narrowing as he aimed down the barrel of his revolver. He fired four rapid shots, the bullets slamming into Michael's torso and sending him staggering backward. A stunned silence filled the room as they stood frozen, waiting for Michael to rise again. Instead, they heard the sickening thud of his body tumbling over the balcony railing and crashing onto the floor below. Wasting no time, Deputy Bloch turned to Jamie, his face etched with immediacy. "We can't take any chances," he said, his voice low and urgent, "this guy doesn't go down easy." He moved swiftly to a corner shelf, grabbing a length of sturdy wire and coiling it tightly.

Deputy Bloch turned back to Jamie. "Listen to me carefully," he instructed, "I'm going to secure this cable wire to the windowsill, wrap it tightly around your waist, and lower you to the ground. Do you understand?" Jamie nodded silently, her eyes downcast.

Jamie had been here before. Rachel lowered her down like this before from Sheriff Meeker's roof. But deep in her heart, she knew that no plan, no matter how well-intentioned, could save her from the inevitable horror that was about to unfold.

Before he could finish his sentence, Michael burst back into the room, his entrance as violent and destructive as a hurricane. Jamie screamed in terror as she saw his mask, now coated in a layer of what she assumed was his own blood. Jamie thought

that with so much blood, he must have landed headfirst after being shot. It looked like his face had split open on impact. Now with the added gore, he looked *more* murderous, angrier than ever. Bloch spun around to aim his revolver at Michael but was too slow. In an instant, Michael was upon him, grabbing the barrel of Bloch's gun. He fired, the bullet tearing a hole through the Shape's hand and grazing his mask, sending a spray of blood flying. Unfazed, Michael raised a knife in his other hand, a weapon Bloch hadn't noticed. He plunged the blade into Bloch's arm, causing him to drop his revolver.

Michael then grabbed the cable Bloch had tied to the windowsill. Bloch's eyes met Jamie's, a silent message that it was time for her to flee. With a violent jerk, Michael wrapped the cable around Bloch's neck, hoisted him up, and hurled him out of the window. As Bloch began to fall, Michael stepped on the remaining cable wire, resulting in a sickening snap as Bloch's neck broke, ending his life. Michael Myers let the wire go from under his foot. Bloch's body hit the lawn outside with a heavy thud.

Michael turned to look for Jamie.

She was gone.

\* \* \*

Jamie was drenched in a cold sweat, and her heart ran like mad against her rib cage. With adrenaline fueling her every move, she sprinted down the creaky wooden staircase toward

the front door. Her hands - slick with perspiration - fumbled with the lock in a desperate attempt to escape the nightmare that had become her reality. She unlocked the door, but her efforts to open it were met with resistance. With a push that mustered all her remaining strength, the door creaked open just enough to reveal a sliver of the outside world. Suddenly, something grotesque rolled in through the narrow opening. It was an eyeball, still glistening with fresh tears, which had been removed from its socket. Jamie let out a blood-curdling shriek. She peered through the tiny gap she had managed to create in the door, and the sight that met her eyes threatened to shatter her sanity into a million pieces. Overwhelmed by terror and revulsion, Jamie's mind began to spin. Disbelief, disgust, and paralyzing fear invaded her mind. She felt her grip on reality slipping as she witnessed the full extent of her uncle's terror.

A gruesome pile of lifeless bodies barricaded the doorway, each one belonging to a police officer who had been stationed in and around the house. Michael was no man. She understood that now. He had gotten to them before they could make it to their vehicles and get to the hospital. Their bodies had been mutilated beyond recognition, sliced open like livestock in a butcher's shop. Jamie's stomach churned as she noticed that some of their faces were missing, their identities erased by Michael's brutal handiwork.

As she nudged the door open further, bits of internal organs spilled into the doorway, making a sickening, wet sound. The sight and sound made Jamie gag, her body recoiling in horror. Realizing the futility of her attempts to escape through the front door, she slowly retreated from the gruesome scene, her heart heavy with despair. The fog lights that were set up around the house suddenly shut down, and Jamie stopped dead in

her tracks so she wouldn't trip over her own feet. It was dark now—almost pitch black.

After Jamie took a few moments to collect herself and let her eyes adjust to the now inky blackness, she crept into the living room, her footsteps barely audible over the deafening sound of her heartbeat. The room was filled with antique furniture, more silent witnesses to the horrors within the house. As she tiptoed around the room, her eyes caught a glimpse of something in the distance that made her blood run cold. The white mask of her uncle was illuminated by the pale moonlight streaming in through the window. He was standing guard at the back door. His towering figure was monolithic.

At that moment, Jamie had a horrifying realization. She was trapped in this house of madness, a prisoner in his home. The nightmare she had been desperately trying to escape was her reality, and there was no way out.

Jamie's heart raced as she sprinted back toward the entryway, her chest heaving with each frantic breath. Fear and panic had been constant companions over the last few hours, but they had reached their all-time high. His mask, the bodies outside, the sound of Doctor Loomis' cries of pain. They never left her mind, sending her thoughts into a chaotic whirlwind. But she needed to focus! The hallway loomed ahead, the streetlights from outside casting eerie, dancing shadows on the walls. Jamie felt she was in one of those haunted houses at the Haddonfield Carnival. Every step she took seemed to weigh heavier and heavier on her trembling legs, threatening to give way beneath her. She hesitated momentarily, but only briefly because she knew her uncle lurked somewhere nearby, adding the required adrenaline to keep her moving.

Summoning what courage she had left, she drew in a deep

breath, willing herself to confront what was ahead of her. Jamie darted toward the hallway adjacent to the stairs, her senses on high alert. Approaching the first door on the left, her trembling hand struggled to grasp the cold, metal doorknob. The door creaked open, revealing a dimly moonlit staircase leading down to the basement. Staring into the abyss before her, Jamie steadied her breath and tried to steady her racing heart. The musty odor of damp earth invaded her nostrils, making her recoil involuntarily. She knew that venturing further into the darkness was inevitable if she wanted to find a way out, but this was more than just a risk. What if she got trapped down there? What if there really was no way out? She pushed those thoughts away and took her first step onto the rickety staircase. She strained her eyes and attempted to pierce through the blackness. Her heart pounded fiercely within her small as if it could burst through at any moment. An overwhelming sense of anticipation filled her mind, fueling her hopes of discovering a basement window or other means of escape.

However, Jamie's haste proved to be her downfall. In her desperate search for an exit, she failed to notice the gaping hole in the stairs that Doctor Loomis had fallen through earlier. Her foot plunged through the unforgiving gap with a sudden jolt, sending her hurtling headlong toward the unforgiving concrete below. The impact reverberated through her skull, radiating a searing pain that coursed through her entire head. A cry of agony escaped her lips, but she quickly stifled it, aware that her uncle could be lurking nearby. Struggling to rise to her feet, Jamie winced as a sharp pain shot up her ankle. She had sprained it. Badly. Despite the excruciating discomfort, she knew she had to press on, relying on her uninjured ankle to push herself up. Staggering forward, Jamie ducked under the

staircase, feeling the warm trickle of blood from a gash on her forehead. The basement seemed to stretch out endlessly before her, and an overwhelming sense of despair threatened to consume her. She was more than aware of the upward hill she faced to get out of this: a sprained ankle, a throbbing head, and a pervasive darkness that seemed to envelop her and everything around her. Yet, she forced herself to keep moving. It wasn't as if she had a choice.

Straining her eyes to pierce through the dark and dank basement, Jamie tried to seek out any discernible details in the gloom. However, aside from a minuscule window that provided no hope of escape (even for a small child), the surroundings offered little solace. The air hung heavy with the nauseating stench of mildew, and Jamie's once beautiful princess dress now clung to her damp, clammy skin, the elegance now marred by the foul, wet floor.

THUMP.

THUMP.

THUMP.

Slow, deliberate footsteps echoed from above through the oppressive silence. Panic surged within her again, intensifying the pounding in her chest. With nowhere to hide, she frantically searched for an escape. Jamie's desperation peaked as the footsteps drew nearer, her mind racing against time. Just as all hope seemed lost, her eyes fell upon a rusted steel laundry chute tucked away in a shadowy corner of the basement. It wasn't an ideal hiding place by any means, but in the darkness, it appeared to be the only chance of evading her relentless pursuer.

Another footstep sounded much closer this time, and Jamie

knew she had to act fast. She watched as the basement door creaked open, revealing a pair of worn workers' boots at the top of the staircase. Jamie felt a surge of adrenaline, knowing that her uncle was coming, and she had to move quickly if she wanted to stay alive.

As Jamie reached the laundry chute, she saw the door rusted shut. She cursed under her breath, frustration and fear building in equal measure. With no other options, she looked to her right and spotted a piece of wall that had crumbled away at some point in the distant past. She picked it up with both hands and rushed back to the chute door, slamming it down as hard as possible. The noise it made was deafening, and she hoped Michael didn't recognize the sound of where she had chosen to hide. The door finally gave way, swinging open with a metallic groan. Relief flooded through Jamie as she peered down into the narrow opening. But she knew she couldn't just crawl in without securing the door behind her. She searched the ground for something to use as a makeshift lock and found a thin, sturdy rock. She picked it up and wedged it between the lock and hinge, securing the door as best she could.

With her makeshift lock in place, Jamie crawled inside the narrow chute. It was cramped and claustrophobic, and she could feel her heart wanting to explode out of her chest. The metal sheeting of the chute was rusty and grimy, and it felt unstable beneath her weight. She tried to calm herself, but her body shook with adrenaline and was drenched in sweat. As Jamie huddled in the cramped, grimy space, she heard footsteps approaching. Panic set in once again, and she prayed silently for salvation. "Please, God, don't let him get me." She prayed quietly to herself.

Her uncle was down here with her, and she knew she was



running out of time. She tried to control her breathing, but each gasp felt like it would betray her presence. She closed her eyes, hoping against hope that he would pass her by. The sound of heavy footsteps was getting closer and closer every second. The tension was beyond unbearable. Jamie could feel her uncle's presence. He was here, in front of the chute.

The laundry chute rattled, its initial vibrations barely registering in Jamie's anxious mind. She attributed it to her nervousness, dismissing it only briefly as mere jitters. But then, abruptly, the rattling ceased, and Jamie's heart skipped a beat. With both hands clasped tightly over her mouth, she stifled a scream upon glimpsing the shadowy figure of her uncle Michael near the chute door. Fear coursed through her veins as the severity of the situation increased almost beyond what her mind could take. A surge of wild violence overcame Michael as he relentlessly shook the chute, driven by an uncontrollable rage that knew no boundaries. Jamie could sense his determination to tear down the door, and her desperation engulfed her. She had to do something. Anything.

*Crawl up*, she thought.

It was the only option that came to mind. With every ounce of strength she could muster, Jamie pinched her feet at one end of the chute, enduring the excruciating pain radiating from her swollen and sprained left ankle. Bracing her back against the other side, she started working her way upward, painstakingly inch by inch. The rattling of the chute ceased once more, replaced by the haunting sound of raspy breathing emanating from the other side. Jamie's heart raced as she contemplated the possibility of dying here in the rusty laundry chute.

STAB!

Suddenly, a jarring, metallic clang banged beneath her feet, causing her to look down instinctively. Her uncle had resorted to stabbing through the chute, desperately trying to reach her. Now, in this moment of absolute terror, she couldn't help herself. Jamie Lloyd began to scream.

STAB!

Pull.

STAB!

Pull.

The relentless cycle continued as her uncle repeatedly pierced the walls of the chute, sending metallic rust dust swirling in the air. With each stab, Jamie's pain intensified. And then the Shape hit his target. The knife struck her already injured ankle. The agony shot through her body, but driven by pure adrenaline and fear, she pressed on, determined to escape. The stabbing grew more erratic, fueled by the Shape's unbridled rage. Again and again, Michael attacked the chute with his knife. In one fateful moment, Jamie seized an opportunity. She allowed herself to drop slightly, aligning her foot with the incoming blade, using it as an impromptu springboard. With all her strength, she propelled herself upwards, leaping high enough to grab hold of the handle on the first floor chute door.

Pulling herself up proved to be a grueling task. Although Jamie was of slight build, her upper body strength was severely lacking. Nevertheless, she summoned every ounce of energy, mustering a final burst of power. With a mighty effort, she hauled herself up, inch by agonizing inch. Once she was level

with the door, she pushed it open with relief, crashing into the first-floor bathroom in a dizzying, breathless frenzy.

\* \* \*

Picking herself up was more than just a difficult task - it was tantamount to torture. Every movement felt like excruciating torment as Jamie struggled to pick herself up from the floor. The pain pulsating through her body seemed impossible. With trembling hands, she gathered the strength to examine her left ankle, only to be confronted by a scene more harrowing than she had anticipated. The sight before her eyes resembled a grotesque amalgamation, as if her ankle had endured the merciless wrath of a blender. The mangled flesh sent nausea surging through Jamie's stomach, threatening to make her vomit. Blood gushed from the torn and ravaged wound, splattering the pristine bathroom tiles with crimson stains. Panic surged within her as she realized what could happen. Time was slipping away, and she would die bleeding out if she didn't take immediate action. Frantically scanning her surroundings, Jamie's gaze fell upon a towel within reach. She seized it, the fabric cool against her trembling fingers. She wondered briefly how long that towel had been waiting to be used. With deliberate yet shaky movements, she wrapped the towel tightly around her injured ankle, exerting pressure to stanch the relentless flow of blood. Agony rippled through her body, each turn of the makeshift bandage eliciting a fresh surge of pain. The intensity was extreme, but she refused to succumb to the pain. Gritting her teeth, Jamie clung to consciousness. The consequences of losing herself to unconsciousness were

too significant to bear.

Jamie tried to put weight on her left foot, but a sharp pain shot up her leg. She winced and grasped onto the bathroom sink to steady herself. Jamie realized how dire her situation was as she looked around the bathroom. She was trapped in a house with a maniac who was determined to kill her, and she had no way of defending herself. She needed help and fast. She wondered where Doctor Loomis was. She needed a friendly face right now. The thought of being left alone with her uncle made her feel sick with fear. Jamie knew she had to keep moving, even if it meant dragging her injured leg behind her. She limped out of the bathroom and into the hallway. She had to find a way out of this nightmare.

Jamie's trembling hand reached for the doorknob of the bathroom door, her pulse racing within her chest. Slowly, she turned it, aware of the imminent loud creak that echoed through the house's quiet. Each door in the house seemed to have a haunting creak, each one frightening Jamie more. Holding her breath, Jamie strained her ears, desperately listening for any hint of approaching footsteps. The door swung open, revealing the dim main entry hallway stretching before her. To her right, just a few steps away, was the basement door. Jamie knew that the murderous threat she was trying to escape could emerge from that very entrance at any moment if he hadn't already. Panic, the familiar feeling, urged her to find an escape route. She needed to reach the back door and flee this nightmarish place. Gradually, her racing pulse began to calm, allowing her to breathe more steadily. However, a distinct haunting engulfed the house as if the walls held the weight of tragic history. Ghosts and ghoulies might be dismissed as bullshit designed to frighten little girls, but Jamie couldn't deny that the air felt dense and

heavy with unseen energy. She remembered what Dr. Loomis had told her earlier. This house had been the stage for her uncle's first murderous act. Jamie's thoughts reeled, thinking she had been occupying the exact spot where her aunt was murdered all those years ago.

As she cautiously approached the kitchen, where the back door beckoned, an inexplicable phenomenon began to unfold within her mind. A powerful blast of mental disarray crashed over her, leaving her dizzy and disoriented as she walked the halls toward the back door. It was more than just the physical consequences of her fall down the basement staircase; this was an entirely different sensation. She recognized the possibility of blood loss, but this sensation went beyond physiological explanations. Inexplicably, Jamie felt an overwhelming compulsion to turn back, to ascend the staircase that awaited her above. It was an irrational urge, contrary to her survival instincts. Going upstairs would be suicidal, a surrender to death itself. But an external force seemed to manipulate her thoughts, a voiceless whisper commanding her compliance. It was as though an invisible puppeteer was overruling her consciousness. Helplessly, Jamie found herself reversing her steps, retracing her path backward, and ascending the staircase, guided by a mysterious, ethereal force that defied reason and deflected her escape.

The haunting resonance of the voice spoke through Jamie's mind as she ambled up the old, musty staircase, its ghostly tendrils seeping into Jamie's consciousness. It reminded her of the unsettling compulsion she had last experienced during her blackout episode a year ago when she had been engulfed by a maddening frenzy and stabbed her foster mother. Yet, unlike that disorienting episode, she was now fully aware

of her surroundings, acutely attuned to the voice's insidious persuasion. Each step she took up the stairs seemed to intensify the pounding of her heart, rhythmically beating in her ears as if desperately trying to convey a warning. A heavy weight seemed to settle upon Jamie's body, impeding her progress. Every movement became a struggle, as if the invisible force sought to anchor her to the staircase's decaying steps. The atmosphere around her grew oppressively thick, as if the air conspired to suffocate her. The stairs appeared to stretch on forever, feeding her growing unease. She questioned whether she would ever breach its dark veil and reach the upper floor, where God only knew what awaited her.

Restless eyes darted frantically across the dimly lit expanse, searching every nook and cranny for the presence of her homicidal uncle. The fear of his sudden appearance, of his sadistic intent, clutched her heart in an iron grip. Each second that passed without his appearance tightened the coil of dread within her. The urge to retreat, to flee the cursed house and its unseen terrors, gnawed at her frayed nerves. But this force persisted in propelling her forward, urging her onward in an inexorable march toward the summit of the stairs.

At last, Jamie's weary ascent yielded its long-awaited reward as she reached the landing, her chest heaving with exertion and trepidation. A sense of foreboding seized her as her gaze fell upon the yawning entrance to the attic, its door ajar, allowing dim light to seep through the cracks. An unsettling, flickering yellow glow emanated from the abyss within, casting dark, waving shadows. The voice beckoned her towards the attic, and to fulfill its summons; she would need to ascend the ladder and enter that forsaken realm.

Once again, that intangible pull tugged at her being, guiding

her steps with otherworldly grace. It was as if her feet barely skimmed the ladder's rungs, propelled by the mysterious force that defied comprehension. Fear swirled within Jamie's gut, a dark vortex of apprehension. Whatever awaited her in that attic, she knew it wouldn't be good. She hesitated, her mind pleading to retreat, to turn away from the imminent horrors lurking beyond that threshold. But the elusive compulsion prevailed, urging her onwards, an unseen puppeteer controlling her every movement.

The attic was now before Jamie, a macabre chamber of secrets and forgotten relics. The air was thick with the scent of aged wood and decay. Dim light emanated from dozens of flickering candles scattered haphazardly around the room, casting bouncing shadows upon the jumbled assortment of forgotten treasures. Her eyes darted anxiously, trying to absorb the disarray of oddities that filled the space. A rusted tricycle stood in one corner, its spokes caked with layers of dust. Impressionistic art prints, their frames worn and faded, were stacked on top of one another against the wall, their colors muted with age. A collection of photographs lay strewn across the floor, scattered the remnants of the Myers family's forgotten history.

Nervously, Jamie gingerly ventured forth, following a narrow, winding path that meandered through the chaotic assortment of items. The rhythmic flicker of the candles acted as her guiding lights, their yellow glow illuminating the path ahead. As she neared the trail's end, her gaze widened in horror. In the heart of the room, in the clutter and debris, lay an altar. It was a crude and haphazard construction adorned with arcane symbols. Yet, what rested at the center sent a shiver of dread coursing through Jamie's veins. It was a small, child-sized coffin. The vessel

Doctor Loomis had told her about was the stolen grave of an innocent child. And now, she stood before it, a storm of fear and the beginnings of understanding swirling within her mind.

Time stood still as Jamie tentatively approached the coffin. The air grew dense with anticipation, an intangible miasma of foreboding. With trembling hands, she reached out to touch the cold, weathered surface, her fingertips brushing against the rough wood. Dread clawed at her thoughts. In an instant, the quiet of the attic was shattered by a loud thud. A lifeless body suddenly crashed from the ceiling, landing with a bone-chilling impact mere inches from Jamie. She screamed in terror, her voice piercing the stifling air. It was Max. The dog had become a grotesque spectacle of carnage. The once vibrant and friendly creature lay lifelessly, its body brutally mutilated. Its mouth had been ripped open at the jaw. Its tongue had been ripped from its severed remains. The innards of poor Max had been savagely devoured, leaving a horrid picture of Michael's insane brutality and hunger. The sight was too much to bear—horrors beyond comprehension that defied reason and sanity. Jamie wanted to run. But the voice in her head forced her body to be still.

Jamie's grip on reality grew increasingly tenuous, slipping like sand through her trembling fingers. Her mind teetered on the precipice of a dark abyss, her fragmented thoughts swirling in a chaotic whirlpool. She fought desperately to maintain her grasp on sanity, torn between the imperative to shield herself from the horrors unfurling before her and the insidious sway of the phantom voice. She understood the dire consequences that awaited should she succumb to its relentless influence. It had happened once before, in the depths of the previous fateful year. Jamie vigorously shook her head as if attempting to dislodge



the tendrils of the voice's control. It kept getting louder, and she would fight if it killed her. She needed to reclaim her agency to assert her autonomy. Every fiber of her being rebelled against the insidious whispers, urging her to yield to them. She had to remain herself. If it took over again like last year, Jamie knew it would never leave, and she would become one with it - permanently.

Silence.

Sudden, impossible silence.

The voice stopped, and Jamie began to weep with relief. In the back of her head, she felt it would inevitably return, but she needed to get out of there now while she had control. But then, among the horrors that engulfed the attic, she saw Rachel. A surge of anguish, despair, and sanity-breaking thoughts of how much Rachel suffered ripped through Jamie's soul as she beheld the lifeless figure. Jamie recalled her vision of Michael stabbing someone she could not see earlier that day. Now she knew who it was. Rachel sat slumped in a chair, her head tilted at an unnatural angle, her vacant eyes wide open, forever trapped in a frozen visage of terror punctuated by the horrifying sight of a pair of scissors protruding from Rachel's violated throat. Dried, cracked blood clung to her skin. The violence that had claimed her life was evident. The sight sent Jamie spiraling into madness. She thought that her mind would finally break.

"RACHELLLLL!!!!" She screamed.

In a frenzied state, Jamie lunged forward, gripping Rachel's lifeless body and shaking it with desperate fervor. She cried. She pleaded. She begged and begged, her voice a crescendo of madness, beseeching her step-sister to wake. "Come alive, Rachel! Come alive!!! PLEASE!!!! COME ALIVE!!!!" But there was no response, no flicker of life within Rachel's vacant gaze.

The scissors, stained with the evidence of her brutal demise, sickeningly slid out from her violated throat as Jamie's frantic efforts intensified. Dread fell over her as the scissors slid, making a meaty and wet sound as they fell and hit the floor. She staggered backward, her veins pumping blood filled with primal fear. Jamie's blood ran cold as she turned, her eyes fixated on the sight that awaited her. He was here. Her uncle, the embodiment of unspeakable evil, was ascending the ladder, filling the space with an aura of finality. Regardless, she knew there was no time to collapse under the weight of grief or terror. She needed to fight. Reluctantly, she reached down, her trembling hand closing around the cold metal of the scissors that had been wielded as an instrument of Rachel's demise.

Grief swelled within Jamie's chest, threatening to rupture her fragile composure, but she quelled the storm within her. She clenched the scissors tightly with grim resolve, her knuckles turning white. Survival was now paramount.

Jamie's body trembled as she felt the forceful push of the voice again, its insistence growing stronger. What, or who the voice was, was just another question rolling around in her head, but she knew it wanted her inside the fucking coffin. Reluctantly and with no choice, she moved closer to the open casket, her gaze fixed upon its worn, faded pink plush interior. Once vibrant and inviting, the fabric now bore the marks of time's passage, its threads frayed and discolored. The musty odor that emanated from within assailed her senses, mingling the scent of decaying wood with the lingering presence of a forgotten soul. It evoked memories of dusty libraries and neglected attics, saturated with the smell of aging books and the pungency of death. As the unwanted compulsion intensified, Jamie's pulse quickened, a blend of fear and curiosity coursing through her

veins. She climbed the small step stool positioned next to the coffin, whose surface was worn from years of use, and gingerly lowered herself into the embrace of the casket. The plush fabric cradled her body, its familiar touch both unsettling and strangely comforting. Questions flooded her mind, unbidden and unanswered. Who was it that had rested in this very coffin? How had their life come to an end? Were they left to decay within these confines, or had they been preserved?

With a strange sense of surrender, Jamie closed her eyes, allowing the darkness of the casket to enshroud her. The paradoxical sense of refuge within the morbid setting enveloped her like a familiar embrace, as though she had returned to her bed after a long absence. She heard Michael's footsteps approach but didn't wince or try to run. For the first time, she was ready to give up and claim death for herself.

Slowly, Jamie opened her eyes. Her uncle was standing over her. The fear that held her heart tightened its icy grip, yet that inexplicable feeling of inevitability came to her. It was as though the intricate tapestry of events that had unfolded thus far had been carefully woven to lead her to this precise moment within these suffocating confines. Michael's pale countenance flickered in the dim candlelight. In that instant, Jamie pondered the nature of the man before her. Had he once been human, or was he forever condemned to inhabit the guise of a monstrous fiend destined to lurk in the shadows?

Michael held a gleaming kitchen knife in his hand, its razor-sharp edge catching the candlelight and flickering the mirrored image of the flames over Jamie's face. She knew her fate rested in his hands, and the realization filled her with a sense of resignation. She had fought so hard to survive, yet it seemed all her efforts had been in vain. Despite the overwhelming sense

of defeat that gripped Jamie, she began to feel a strange sense of clarity. It was as if everything had become apparent at that moment, and she was finally able to understand the true nature of her situation. With calm acceptance, she spoke.

“Michael...” Her uncle’s grip on the knife momentarily loosened as he cocked his head, an unfamiliar curiosity gleaming in his masked visage. The audacity of calling him by name pierced through the darkness, momentarily puncturing the shroud of her fate.

“Uncle...? Can I see?” Jamie’s voice trembled as she mustered the courage to address her uncle, her trembling finger pointing tentatively toward his haunting mask.

Her request hung in the air, a delicate plea to see some human vulnerability within his evil heart. His hands trembling, Michael placed the gleaming knife onto the sacrificial altar, an ominous display of his willingness to momentarily acquiesce to her plea. He reached behind his head, his movements deliberate and measured, and slowly removed the mask that had concealed his face for far too long. His head remained lowered, partially obscured from view, but Jamie’s gaze fixed on the horrors before her. One of Michael’s eyes remained tightly shut, sealed by a gruesome, disfiguring scar. The other eye peered beneath a mass of burn scars, testaments to a lifetime of unimaginable pain and suffering. It was a face that, to any ordinary person, would elicit sheer horror and disgust. Despite the repulsive nature of his disfigurement, Jamie detected a strange kinship in their shared afflictions. It was as if their scars - his physical, hers mental - mirrored one another, intertwining their fates and binding them in a twisted symmetry. She lifted her gaze and witnessed a tear cascading down her uncle’s ravaged cheek. “You’re just like me.”

Her voice quivered with empathy as she posed her question, seeking a glimpse into his hidden torment. “Does it hurt? The burns?” she inquired softly, her words hanging in the heavy silence that enveloped them.

No response met Jamie’s question. As the tear descended from Michael’s eye, her heart reached out in a tentative gesture of connection. She extended her shaking hand, inching closer to his disfigured face, hoping to bridge the gap between their tortured souls. The touch was meant to convey an understanding born from shared suffering, an unspoken bond forged in the depths of their respective traumas. But the moment her fingertips grazed his scarred flesh, Michael recoiled violently, disrupting the altar’s sanctity. The candles flickered precariously, the flames threatening to ignite a conflagration within the attic. Michael’s demeanor transformed in the chaos, his movements becoming erratic and disjointed as if an unseen force had wrested control of his being. Frantically, he snatched his mask, struggling to conceal his distorted features again, the decaying latex stretching taut over his contorted visage.

In his frantic haste, Michael’s erratic movements sent the once-sacred coffin hurtling toward the ground, its crash resonating through the empty expanse of the house like a gunshot. Jamie stood frozen in disbelief and terror, her mind struggling to process the rapid turn of events. There was an urgent need to flee, and she sprinted towards the attic ladder, her voice piercing the stifling silence as she unleashed a guttural scream that rang through the house’s corridors, an anguished cry in the face of the unfolding nightmare.

\* \* \*

The aftermath of the confrontation earlier had left Doctor Samuel Loomis sprawled across the room; his consciousness snuffed out like a candle in a gust of wind. The sheer force of Michael Myers' assault had sent him hurtling through the air, leaving him vulnerable and defeated. As his eyes fluttered shut, a surge of self-condemnation swept over him, tinged with a profound sense of failure. The weight of the last twenty-six years pressed upon his mind, each moment filled with the desperate struggle to contain the malignancy within Michael. He couldn't escape the suffocating feeling of guilt that gripped his soul, adding to his sense of worthlessness. The embodiment of that guilt and failure loomed upstairs, poised to unleash unspeakable brutality upon the one remaining person Sam had vowed to protect. In that pivotal instant, he began to awaken, not only from the physical impact but from the futility of his self-pity.

Gradually, consciousness seeped back into Sam's battered body, accompanied by disturbing sounds from the upper floor. The sound of crashes and Jamie's shrill screams pierced the air, causing terror to surge within him. Fear rendered him momentarily immobile, paralyzed until an urgent, almost primal impulse surged through his veins. The pressure to rise, to take action, seized him forcefully. He needed to move quickly if he was to save Jamie. Failure was no longer an option. Though it might cost him his life, he resolved to make one final stand. With an unsteady gait, he hoisted himself from the floor. A limp had replaced his missing cane, but sheer determination propelled him forward.

Sam navigated the dark corridors with painstaking effort, the agonizing journey punctuated by the thunderous clamor from above. The front door, his potential escape route, proved im-

penetrable, obstructed by the lifeless bodies of law enforcement officers who unknowingly became casualties in this seemingly endless night of terror. An exasperated sigh escaped Sam's lips as he realized that the only way to bring this nightmare to an end lay in the depths of his rather audacious and risky plan. Unbeknownst to anyone, he had rigged the living room with a trap, a final desperate gambit to halt the relentless march of evil. But first, he needed to lure Michael down from the upper reaches of the house.

Following Jamie's intense screams, Sam pushed through the agony coursing through his weary body, knowing that every second counted. He clutched the staircase railing, his grip a lifeline as he slowly ascended the steps. He saw Jamie. She was descending from the attic ladder. Sam quickened the tempo of his footsteps, and without hesitation, he reached out, seizing Jamie's flailing legs, and yanked her down into his arms. The child's weight pressed heavily against him, threatening to bring him to his knees. Each agonizing step taxed his waning strength, yet he persevered, driven by adrenaline and, shockingly, *love*, for the first time in a very long time. Jamie's shrill cries and frantic kicks filled the air with the insane fear that seemed to own the night. Sam's voice resounded with a defiant challenge as he directed his words to the masked force that lurked above.

"You want her?!" his voice thundered, carrying his resolve. "Then come and get her!"

Descending the stairs with measured steps, Sam maintained a firm grip around Jamie's waist, his body in constant motion as he maneuvered backward. His gaze remained locked on the unfolding horror above, where Michael Myers, propelled by inhuman agility, leaped from the attic to the second-floor

hallway. The impact of his landing resonated beneath Sam's feet. Looking up, Sam found himself trapped in the piercing gaze of Michael's eyes, burning with an unfathomable blend of madness and homicidal rage. At that moment, Michael seemed to almost grow in stature, his presence radiating an unsettling aura of pure power. Sam's thoughts raced, acknowledging the pressing urgency to shield Jamie from his wrath. Sam taunted his former patient, his voice dripping with defiance. "You want her, Michael? Come and get her!!!" It was a challenge that contained both desperation and strategic intent.

He continued his descent; the weight of Jamie's trembling body was getting tricky. Each step echoed with the haunting cadence of Michael's heavy breaths. His grip on Jamie threatened to slip, but Sam clung to her fiercely, his determination true. "You want her, Michael? Let's play a game called 'Catch the little girl!'" Sam goaded, luring his monstrous adversary further into the trap he had set in the living room. The plan took shape in Sam's mind as he navigated the final stretch of the stairs, anxious momentum propelling him forward. With a final surge of adrenaline, Sam relinquished his hold on the railing, springing toward the living room, the epicenter of their impending confrontation. Walking backward while bearing the weight of Jamie, compounded by the absence of his cane, posed a dangerous challenge for Sam. If they fell, it would be the end for both of them. Driven by purpose, Sam pressed on. The weight of a ceaseless burden, the relentless pursuit to defeat Michael and to quell the madness that consumed them both, provided him with all the resolve he needed. Madness intertwined with obsession, as Sam teetered on the edge of his sanity.

With an evil grace that defied natural limitations, Michael



descended the staircase; each step cloaked in an unsettling silence. Gripped tightly in his hand, a gleaming knife shimmered, casting a glimmer within the dim moonlight that permeated the house. Jamie, suspended over Sam's shoulder, released a torrent of screams and thrashes, her primal instincts fighting against the clutches of terror. Behind the impassive mask, Michael's intentions remained shrouded, but his predatory gaze fixed upon his vulnerable prey. The air crackled with unseen energy, an unadulterated psychosis that seemed to emanate from within him. Sam's resolve hardened as he taunted Michael, his voice booming through the living room. "Catch the little girl, Michael!" It was a desperate mantra, almost like a twisted childhood game.

As they crossed the threshold into the living room, Sam's heart hammered relentlessly against his rib cage—every fiber of his being recognized that this pivotal moment held the power to determine their fates.

The room seemed to close in on Sam as he desperately surveyed his surroundings, his eyes darting from one object to another in search of any advantage he could exploit. Michael Myers, the embodiment of evil, stood before him, his knife gleaming ominously in the dim light. Tension coiled in the air, palpable and suffocating as if a venomous serpent was poised to strike. Sam's trembling hand delved into the depths of his coat, retrieving a small transmitter. His relief was visible on his face as he smiled. This was it. Like a relentless force of nature, Michael hurtled towards Sam with inhuman speed, closing the distance between them instantly. Sam's heart raced, time seemingly slowing to a crawl. Sam pressed a button on the transmitter, triggering a sequence that unleashed a heavy chain-link net from above, ensnaring Michael in its unforgiving grip.

The wild beast - trapped but not yet defeated, Michael thrashed and roared, unleashing a primal fury that only intensified Sam's resolve - the motherfucker was trapped, and he wasn't going to get away.

Aware that time was of the essence, Sam swiftly pivoted, his earlier preparations now coming into play. Concealed behind a makeshift wall, he had positioned a tranquilizer rifle. Laden with an ample dosage capable of incapacitating an elephant, the rifle promised an end to this nightmarish ordeal. Sam retrieved the weapon with practiced precision, steadying himself as he aimed at Michael's contorted figure. The first dart found its mark in Michael's shoulder, eliciting a guttural roar from Michael's core. The killer persisted, defying the sedative's intended effects. Knowing one would never be enough, Sam fired a second dart, the projectile embedding itself in Michael's chest, causing him to stagger and fall to a knee. Still, the Shape fought against the encroaching grasp of unconsciousness. Determined to make this Michael's final Halloween, Sam released the last dart, hitting the monster in his stomach. Its impact finally brought Michael to his knees. But he didn't fall entirely.

A surge of disbelief coursed through Sam's veins. Could Michael still be conscious after enduring such a potent tranquilizer assault? Left with no other recourse, Sam erratically turned and seized a two-by-four from the nearby windowsill, his grip firm as he sprinted towards the fallen figure of Michael. Raising the wooden beam high above his head, he unleashed a barrage of strikes, each blow fueled by the accumulated fury and anguish of years past. With every resounding thud, Sam's strength seemed to surge. Michael was going to feel this. Sam was going to make goddamn sure of it.

Doctor Sam Loomis hit as hard as he could.

SLAM!

SLAM!

SLAM!

“DIE! DIE! DIE, MICHAEL, DIE!!!” Sam’s voice resounded with an unhinged mix of fury and madness, his screams interwoven with bizarre laughter bordering on hysteria.

The board’s weight crashing against Michael’s broken body became a triumphant declaration, a defiance against the unspeakable evil that had plagued Haddonfield for far too long. Blow after blow, Sam reveled in cathartic release, his relentless assault bringing him closer to his long-awaited victory. Michael, the seemingly invincible force, now lay sprawled upon the ground, his form battered and broken. Blood soaked his formerly pristine white mask. Yet, Sam’s insatiable thirst for justice remained unquenched. The board continued to descend upon Michael’s head, each strike a savage punctuation mark, sealing the irreversible fate of the relentless killer.

This was the culmination, the final chapter in the dark saga. Sam’s breath grew labored, the exertion had pushed his body to its limits. And then, a sharp jolt of pain pierced his arm, a cruel reminder of mortality’s grip. The moment he had anticipated had arrived with a poetic poignancy—a heart attack, fated to strike at this pivotal juncture. Sam clung to the hope that death would claim him before the inevitable journey to the hospital, for he knew all too well that if Michael survived and embarked on another Halloween massacre, then the only salvation left for Sam would be his own demise. An incredible and potent pressure built within his chest, the white-hot agony

coursing through his heart. Collapsing upon his white whale, he succumbed to the darkness just as the piercing wails of police sirens and approaching ambulances heralded the end of an era at the old Myers' place.

In the corner, Jamie huddled alone. She began to weep.

## Chapter 10

There was no time for this. The man in black seethed with impatience, his darkened soul brooding over the unexpected turn of events. The capture of Michael Myers hadn't been anticipated - nor prepared for, shattering the carefully orchestrated plans set in motion centuries ago. Driven by a purpose constructed of pure evil, the man in black harbored a profound commitment to see these plans through, no matter the cost. Dr. Loomis, the meddling old man, should have met his demise long ago. His existence insulted the forces that governed the man in black's every move. Yet, inexplicably, those cloaked powers had kept the old man alive, their motives and methods shrouded in a veil of maddening mystery. The man in black had learned better than to question them; Answers were scarce, explanations fleeting.

Obsessed with his duty, the man in black knew he had to rectify the situation to free Michael from the clutches of the police force. Michael was meant to embody invincibility, an unstoppable entity carefully crafted for a dark purpose. The fact that he had been subdued and rendered unconscious by the feeble hands of the old man filled the man in black with seething rage. It was not only a catastrophic failure on Michael's part but also an unforgivable oversight of the group

entrusted with his handling and Thorn itself. The council would undoubtedly address this grievous transgression in all its inscrutable authority. Michael would be mended, but he would also suffer the most severe punishments.

From his inconspicuous vehicle, parked down the dimly lit street, the man in black observed the Myers' house with intensity. His piercing gaze scrutinized every unfolding event, taking note of each detail. The arrival of the authorities did not go unnoticed, their flashing lights casting a blue and red glow that tainted the surroundings. Dr. Loomis, now a captive of his own recklessness, was unceremoniously loaded onto an ambulance. Jamie, the young girl who now possessed extreme significance and importance to the council, was ushered into a police cruiser, her fate now tangled in the web of uncertainty. And then, there was Michael. Emerging from the dilapidated threshold of the house, he remained restrained on a stretcher, his visage concealed behind the facade of the mask. The man in black's eyes narrowed, questioning why they dared not remove it. The mask seemed to have woven itself into the very fabric of his existence. He clung to it with an unnatural devotion, even in his unconscious state.

With fascination and annoyance, the man in black observed the meticulous loading of Michael into a second ambulance opposite the one that held Dr. Loomis. A surge of irritation coursed through him as he counted the six armed police officers standing guard, their trembling fingers clutching their weapons. Dealing with one or two officers would have been child's play, but the overwhelming presence surrounding Michael was a cause for concern. He could see the fear in their eyes, a testament to Michael's power. Perhaps, the man in black mused, he could exploit that fear to his advantage.

Starting his car, the man in black steered its darkened form toward the Sheriff's office. Halloween night, a night that had brought unimaginable horror to the sleepy little town of Haddonfield was far from over for the man in black. It was merely the beginning of a torrent of violence orchestrated by forces far beyond mortal comprehension.

\* \* \*

Sam's weathered body lay helpless upon the gurney, wracked with a relentless torment that seemed to penetrate his very essence. Agony surged through his fragile frame, causing his weakened muscles to quiver and convulse in protest. His eyes, clouded with pain, squeezed shut desperately to escape the harshness of the ambulance's unforgiving fluorescent lights. The searing brightness pierced his eyelids, intensifying his suffering and leaving him disoriented in a sea of discomfort. The beads of sweat clinging to his furrowed brow dripped excessively as he fought the arduous battle within him, each droplet evidence of his pain.

A feeble whisper escaped Sam's parched lips, carried away by the clamor of the moving vehicle. It was a plea for mercy, a desperate request to the unforgiving universe that seemed determined to prolong his torment. "Please," he croaked, his voice a mere whisper, struggling to be heard. "End me."

The paramedic, his uniform a stark symbol of detachment and clinical efficiency, regarded Sam with an almost unnerving optimism. A faint smile tugged at the corners of his lips, an unwelcome juxtaposition against the depths of Sam's despair.

Peering down at the anguished figure before him, the paramedic offered his response, his words laced with a light-heartedness that grated against Sam's plea for release. "No can do, my man," he replied; his voice was jovial, and Sam felt it was out of place. "We're here to get that heart of yours examined, and I reckon you'll be just fine, buddy. Hopefully, it's just a bout of hypertension, a temporary crisis, rather than a full-blown heart attack. Now, don't take my word for it. I ain't no fancy doctor, but let me tell ya, based on my fair share of experiences with heart attacks, you'd likely be six feet under by now if that were the case."

Sam sank with melancholy, heavy with the weight of his current suffering and the events of the past twenty-four hours. The paramedic's words, which Sam knew were intended to offer reassurance, only deepened his hopelessness. He yearned for respite, a final rest that would grant him release from the burdens that had plagued his existence for far too long. Sam had traversed the horrors that most could never comprehend, fulfilling his duties and facing unimaginable terrors. Now, in his weariness, he craved the tender embrace of death, a refuge from the anguish that held him captive.

As the ambulance sped through the early morning streets of Haddonfield, its sirens wailing mournfully into the night, Sam's body trembled with pain, and he resigned himself to his fate. The world outside blurred into a whirlwind of shadows and lights, a chaotic tapestry of fleeting images that mirrored the disarray within his soul. The cold wind rushed through the open windows, whipping at his pallid skin. The ambulance ran through the darkness, its relentless speed an embodiment of the urgency surrounding Sam's fragile state. The town's lights flickered past in a disorienting haze. The howling of sirens



and the blaring horns of other vehicles rang in his ears. Each passing moment seemed to draw him closer to an unknown fate, a precipice from which there would be no return.

\* \* \*

Deputy Alan Peters of the Haddonfield Police Department found himself engulfed in a sea of paperwork as he hurriedly filed away the evening's complaints at his cluttered desk. The acrid scent of a freshly lit Marlboro hung lazily in the air, swirling among the piles of paperwork and mingling with the aroma of brewing coffee wafting in from the nearby breakroom. The day turning into the night had been relentless for the officers of Haddonfield. Drunk driving arrests and a never-ending stream of complaints had flooded their desks, the typical tumult that accompanied this time of year. However, something far more sinister had eclipsed the run-of-the-mill teenage hijinx bullshit. The Boogeyman had returned to Haddonfield, unleashing a wave of terror that scared the shit out of even the most seasoned officers. Sheriff Ben Meeker, a hero and role model to Deputy Peters, had taken charge of the ever-evolving nightmare that had gripped their town. The mere mention of Michael Myers frightened Peters. In his relentless pursuit of bloodshed, Myers had already claimed four lives (that they knew of), his insatiable hunger for destruction leaving a trail of dead souls in his wake. Rachel Carruthers, a survivor of Myers' previous massacre, had fought like hell to save herself and her sister, but he found her and murdered her this year. Her body and several others had been piling up at the morgue

for the last hour or so. Three more lifeless bodies had been discovered north of town at the Tower Farm; their lives snuffed out by Myers' twisted hand. The town quivered in fear, rumors and whispers spreading like wildfire through the veins of Haddonfield, igniting the imagination and intensifying the ever-present sense of dread.

Local news organizations were inundating the scene, eagerly capitalizing on the unfolding tragedy. Their incessant calls and inquiries had persisted for the past hour. The narrative of the Boogeyman's resurgence had spread, and regrettably, the death toll enticed young reporters the most, like an irresistible lure. Alan figured that in about two to three hours, every news station from Chicago to New York would be circulating the Sheriff's office, milking the town for every juicy fucking nugget they could get. Alan had no interest in their bullshit. They only cared about their ratings. The town? Well, the town could go fuck itself, couldn't it?

Deputy Peters was anxious because they had actually *caught* Myers this time and were bringing him to the station with several armed officers. Peters didn't want to see Myers, who had scarred him for life since childhood. Myers was once Peters' second-grade classmate. He was a normal kid—nothing out of the ordinary. Then one Halloween night, Alan's classmate slaughtered his older sister in cold blood and was carted off to an insane asylum. Night after night, Alan found himself imprisoned in his nightmares. He would awake within the dream in his bed, and little Mikey Myers materialized beside him, standing over the bed. In these nightmares, Myers donned a blood-stained clown costume. Michael would say, "I killed my sister, and now I'm going to kill you, Alan!" Gripping a gleaming kitchen knife, he would approach Peters' trembling form, his

eyes devoid of humanity. Glistening with menace, Michael would dangle the blade above Peters' left eye, threatening to snuff out his existence instantly. Alan would wake up in a cold sweat every time.

Later in 1978, when Peters was in Chicago, he got a call that his brother, Bob, had been murdered by Myers. Peters was devastated, feeling guilty for not being there to protect his brother. He had always wondered what would have happened if he stayed in Haddonfield. Peters had never talked about the incident with anyone, not even his wife. The scars of that tragedy had never healed, and now, all these years later, Myers had returned to terrorize the town again.

Peters had not been part of the Police Department last year because he was finishing training at the Springfield Academy. He didn't witness the previous massacre but had heard many horror stories about it. The department was still reeling from the aftermath of last year's events. The community had been in mourning, and Peters had seen firsthand its impact on the people of Haddonfield. The night's memories still haunted the town, and now, with Myers back, Peters was afraid that history would repeat itself.

As Alan sipped on his coffee, he gazed out the window, scanning the empty street for any signs of movement. He could feel the tension building up inside him, and his hands began to shake as he took another puff of his cigarette. The thought of Michael Myers made him uneasy, and he couldn't wait for the backup to arrive. An hour passed by, and Alan's eyes grew heavy with fatigue. He rubbed his eyes and tried to focus on the task at hand. He wished to go home to his wife, Cheryl, and snuggle beside her. But duty called, and he had to stay put.

Suddenly, the phone on Alan's desk rang, making him jump.

He answered it hesitantly, half-expecting to hear Ben Meeker on the other end. But it was just the dispatcher giving him an update on the situation. Alan took a deep breath, trying to calm his nerves, and listened intently to the dispatcher's voice.

A bright light illuminated the station, causing Alan to squint his eyes, the sudden glare blinding him for a few seconds. It was the cavalry. Alan couldn't believe he was about to meet the almost mythic figure in a moment. His heart nearly skipped a beat. The front door struck the bell, and Sheriff Meeker shouted, "ALAN, WHERE THE FUCK ARE YOU? GET OVER HERE!" Alan's heart raced as he heard the angry tone in his boss's voice.

He knew better than to keep the Sheriff waiting. "I'm coming, Sheriff!" he called out, hurrying towards the entryway.

As he approached, he saw Sheriff Meeker and a group of deputies dragging a tall figure through the front doors. It was Myers, still wearing his mask. The sight of Myers sent shivers down Alan's spine. He couldn't help but stare at the expressionless mask, almost transfixed by it. Despite his fear, Alan knew he had a job to do, and he quickly regained his composure. "Alan! Don't just stand there. Give us a hand. The fucker weighs fifty goddamn tons!" said Deputy Marlin, annoyed.

Alan moved to help the other officers carry Michael Myers into the station's back room. The notorious killer was unconscious and felt like a lifeless, dense mass in their arms. He didn't look like he should weigh *that* much. He just... felt so incredibly heavy. Despite his motionless state, the lingering fear surrounding Myers was palpable, and Alan felt a sense of extreme unease in every officer as he helped them carry him.

As they made their way down the narrow hallway to the

cell block area, the group had to navigate several obstacles, including scattered equipment and debris and some boozy vomit left behind by some drunken offenders earlier that night. The air was heavy with the scent of stale cigarette smoke and coffee, and the only sound was the muffled shuffling of their feet and the occasional creak of a floorboard. When they finally reached the cell block, Sheriff Meeker barked out, "Throw him in twelve." Alan glanced at Myers' blood-stained white mask as they began moving the unconscious killer toward the cell. Alan was growing increasingly uncomfortable every second he was in Myers' presence.

Deputy Hunt, the only female deputy on staff, approached the cell bars, and with a quick and forceful motion, she flung the door open, revealing the dimly lit cell. The six men holding Myers dragged his unconscious body towards the cot. Meeker looked at Alan and ordered, "Take that fucking mask off his face." Alan released his grip and freed his hands from under Myers' waist. As he brought his hands up to grasp the base of the white mask, Michael Myers awoke from his drugged state and immediately grabbed Alan's neck with immense strength. It came out of nowhere. The pressure on his neck was. Myers pushed his fingers inside Alan's flesh and bone, shredding his tendons and crushing his windpipe. Myers sat up quickly to gain a better grip, and in just three seconds, he completely tore Alan Peters' throat apart. Meeker reacted immediately, hitting Myers in the face with the butt of his shotgun. The impact caused Michael's white mask to be stained with crimson blood as he fell to the ground. "Oh, FUCK! Someone help me with Alan!" Meeker barked at the other deputies.

The realization dawned on them that Alan was dead. Deputy Hunt was the first to respond to Meeker's plea for help. Meeker

and Hunt lifted Alan's lifeless body from the floor and struggled to carry him out of the cell block. As they made their way out, Meeker slammed the cell door shut, locking Michael Myers inside. They watched in horror as Michael picked himself onto his knees, facing away from them and gazing up at the room's corner. He appeared to be praying.

\* \* \*

A highway patrolman brought in Jamie Lloyd, as that was all they could spare that evening. The EMTs were busy at the Tower farm, and every deputy under the jurisdiction was combing over the Myers' house, the farm, or the station. Jamie didn't need to see any more bloodshed tonight, so Meeker ordered the swift cleanup of every trace of the gruesome scene, leaving it devoid of any hint of the horrific incident with Myers and Alan that had transpired. Sheriff Meeker announced to the group gathered around him, "The Livingston County Sheriff is on his way with an army of law enforcement officers to transport this psychotic killer to a maximum security prison in Colorado. That's where he'll remain until he draws his last breath."

Jamie, who had been silent until then, gazed up at Sheriff Meeker with a look of understanding. "He'll never die," she stated with certainty, her voice barely above a whisper.

Jamie, Sheriff Meeker, and three Haddonfield Deputies stood in the Haddonfield County Jail's lockup unit, a cold and sterile room that smelled faintly of the disinfectant used to clean up the blood that was spilled just a few moments ago. The room

was small, with only one window that let in a sliver of light. It was suffocatingly silent, except for Jamie's shallow breathing and the occasional shuffle of the deputies' feet. They were all looking at the Boogeyman, kneeling on the floor with his hands cuffed behind his back. Michael Myers was staring at the back wall, unresponsive to his captors.

Ben was caked in his deputy's blood, and while he was sad for Alan, his mind drifted to Sam. He wanted to buy them both a bottle of expensive Scotch and give him a big hug, or at least give him an actual handshake of thanks (Ben laughed at this thought, considering that earlier today, he wanted to send Loomis packing) because his daughter's killer was about to face justice.

Jamie's thoughts were similar. She couldn't believe the man who had terrorized her and her family for so long was finally in custody. She was grateful—all thanks to the unconventional efforts of one Doctor Samuel Loomis. But seeing Michael like this, in chains, almost in an image of prayer, made her uneasy. She wondered if he was thinking about all the people he had killed or if he was plotting his escape. He'd gotten away before. Why not tonight?

Jamie didn't care to be there anymore. She wanted to run out of the room as fast as possible and out of town. She had never felt more alone in her life. She hoped Sam would be okay. She hoped he'd take her in. Jamie didn't give a shit how crazy the old man was. Besides, his insane obsession is officially in lockup now. But she wished greatly that Sam would take her away from here, maybe somewhere warm like California. Jamie had had quite enough of this town and her familial problems. It was high time for a change, and Jamie was ready for one.

"I'll escort the girl out, sir." Said one of the deputies.

"Sounds good, Bobby." Said Sheriff Meeker.

Jamie thought for a moment that only children were called a name like 'Bobby,' and she had to stop herself from giggling. Deputy Bobby was young and inexperienced, but now that the threat was nullified and incarcerated, Jamie felt better about the young man escorting her outside. Deputy Bobby brought Jamie back to the main holding area, through to the lobby, and outside to the parking lot. Jamie hoped with everything that the police cruiser she was looking at out in the parking lot would be the last one she would ever have to sit in for the rest of her life.

"It'll be okay, little girl," said Deputy Bobby as he patted her back, "we *got* the guy!"

Deputy Bobby's over-exuberance at the evening's activities made Jamie want to puke. *This fucking guy*, she thought to herself. Jamie just smiled the biggest fake smile the world had ever seen and nodded. As Jamie stepped into the backseat of the cruiser, a roar of gunshots blasted from within the police station. Her body reacted instinctively as she hit the ground; the sound thundered through her chest. It was as if her worst nightmare had come to life. She felt powerless, knowing that something terrible was happening and that she could do nothing to stop it.

"STAY PUT!" Deputy Bobby's voice boomed as he sprinted toward the station. However, Jamie knew that it was a lost cause. The young man would be dead in less than two minutes.

BANG BANG



BANG BANG  
BANG BANG  
BANG

Jamie's senses were assaulted by the piercing ring in her ears, intensifying with each echoing gunshot that rang painfully through her head. It was as if the sound had taken on a life of its own, mercilessly assaulting her sanity. Panic and fear seized her as she strained to hear the officers' shouts and yells inside the station. The night air carried their desperate cries, distorted by terror and agony. The atmosphere was engulfed in chaos, overwhelming Jamie's senses. The symphony of pandemonium grew louder with each passing second, threatening to drown her in a sea of fear. Her chest heaved with each rapid thump of her racing heart, and she couldn't fathom how much more her young mind and body could endure on this apocalyptic night.

Jamie lay in the back of the police cruiser, frozen, her body trembling uncontrollably as time stretched and distorted in the face of the unknown. The loud chorus of gunshots kept coming, stretching each moment into an eternity. Thoughts raced through Jamie's mind, fueled by utter dread. What was behind those station walls? Who was firing the gun? What happened to the officers trapped within? She imagined their faces, contorted with fear as they faced the gunman. Jamie clung to a fragile hope thread in the chaos, praying *he* didn't get away. She yearned for calm to break through the storm, ending the ceaseless barrage of gunfire that had shattered the night. With every passing moment, her anxiety intensified. Jamie's senses were in a state of overdrive, heightened by the dissonance of the surrounding turmoil. Every sound, every echo, every heartbeat amplified her anguish.

More shots...

...More screams...

...Then it stopped.

\* \* \*

Jamie let go of her ears, slowly raised her head to the window, and looked up. She thought to herself that it was over now. Well, maybe not the terror. She was sure that whatever would happen to her next was inevitable and that it may never end, but the guns had stopped blasting. She did have *some* hope, though. Jamie's sense of determination hadn't left regardless of what might happen. Jamie assumed that if she could make it inside the station, she'd see that some people got hurt, sure, but that the good guys made it out okay for the most part, and the bad guy, whoever it was (*did Michael break out?!*), had died in the firefight. She knew she was probably wrong, but she had been brave enough so far tonight. She wished Doctor Loomis was here. He'd help protect her. But she knew in her heart that she'd been tough and brave tonight. She hoped that her uncle hadn't escaped. She needed to be absolutely sure, though. Or else she was afraid she'd never sleep again for the rest of her life. Jamie got up, opened the cruiser's door, took a few deep breaths, and began the long, slow walk to the lobby she had just left not five minutes ago.

The lobby doors, which once had clear glass panes, were now shattered into tiny shards, with jagged edges protruding

outwards. Jamie's eyes fixated on the shattered entrance as she cautiously stepped forward, her feet crunching on the broken glass. The debris from the door was scattered all over the lobby floor, creating a hazardous obstacle course. Every step she took made her feel like she was walking on eggshells, afraid that a misstep could cause her to trip and fall and cut herself on all the glass. She noticed the exterior walkway leading up to the entrance was also littered with broken glass, like a deadly pathway leading to the station.

When she got to the broken front doors, Jamie saw two dead police officers, their heads were blown in by gunfire, and their brains had been sprayed across the walls. Jamie had seen a lot this evening, but seeing the officer's brains on the walls made her stomach churn. She hunched over the balcony's railing and vomited onto the pavement below, her body convulsing with each heave. She could feel her insides heave and her throat burning with acid. When she was done, she wiped her mouth with her sleeve and stood upright, feeling dizzy and weak. She looked down and saw that her princess dress was ruined and torn. The once red blood had dried on the lower half of her costume, staining it a deep coppery red. She thought of the dance and how nice she looked. She thought of Billy. She hoped he was okay and wished she had kissed him again. Then she looked forward and decided to face what was left of her life.

Jamie cautiously made her way through the smoke-filled corridors. She was scared and cautious not to make any sudden movement. Moving cautiously, she made her way through the station's corridors. The deafening sound of gunfire that stopped minutes ago still rang loudly in her ears, and the acrid smell of gunpowder filled her nostrils. Her eyes watered as she fought back tears; the sight of the dead police officers

reminded her of the danger she faced. The devastation became even more apparent as she entered the main holding area. The once-imposing walls were riddled with bullet holes, and flickering electrical fires had taken hold. Jamie could hear the crackle of electricity, and sparks danced from the recently exposed and crossed wiring, making her flinch at every pop. The dead officers' lifeless, bullet-ridden bodies were scattered haphazardly around her. She could see the terror etched on their faces, and the brutality of the attack made her blood run cold. In front of her was the cell block entrance. Before she even went in, she already knew in her heart what had become of her uncle. But she had to look to be sure.

The cell block door had been blown inward by an explosive device. The fires in the block would need a whole crew of firemen to put it out, and soon before, it took the entire damn building with it. Jamie began to break as she saw Sheriff Meeker lying dead on the black and white tile. He was still bleeding out. A large bullet hole had been fired in his temple, his neck had been caved in by someone's foot, and his neck bones protruded from his flesh. To his right was the young man that helped Jamie outside, Deputy Bobby. He had been shot to death by a hail of flying rounds; his stomach was ripped to shreds. Jamie now began to sob deeply. She couldn't take this reality. Jamie's gaze quivered as it landed on her uncle's cell, torn open by another explosive blast. It was empty. The void mocked her, intensifying the hopelessness that was beginning to fill her. The impact hit her like a relentless barrage, threatening to shatter her fragile sanity. This couldn't be real. After *EVERYTHING* she had been through, after everything she's seen and done, the Shape, the Boogeyman, her uncle - Michael Myers - was gone. Despair and disbelief entangled in Jamie's mind, pulling

her further into the abyss. The weight of her failure and the sacrifices that her friends and loved ones made in vain bore down on her. Her mind began to spiral. She felt like the earth would sink its teeth into her and swallow her whole. The world around her blurred the lines between reality and nightmare, plunging her into a darkness from which there seemed no escape.

Then she heard it.

It was a heinous violation of her mind, a cruel act of corruption that left her feeling violated and vulnerable. The experience was like a frigid spirit that took control of her with alarming swiftness and intensity. The voice that emanated from within was the stuff of nightmares. The voice was deep, dark, and incredibly sinister. It commanded her attention, compelling her to do its bidding with a force that was impossible to resist. It was as though it had taken possession of her, frighteningly taking ownership of her thoughts and emotions. The voice was relentless, refusing to relinquish its hold on her. It burrowed deep within her psyche, an evil presence that refused to be silenced. The voice spoke, its insidious words reverberating through Jamie's mind like a horrifying echo. "*Jamie... Come to me,*" it whispered, the source of its dark power a mystery that sent shivers down her spine. The voice seemed to emanate from *within* her, its source inexplicable and terrifying. Jamie could feel it crawling inside her mind, taking control of her thoughts and emotions with ruthless precision.

Jamie... *Come to me.*"

Jamie obeyed the voice's command without hesitation, compelled to follow its bidding without question. She moved deeper

into the cell block, her footsteps tapping the linoleum down the empty halls like an ominous, hollow drumbeat. The scent of smoke and gunpowder filled the air, remnants of the chaos that had recently unfolded. As she searched for an exit, her eyes fell upon a back door that had been blown apart. Outside, the parking lot was a scene of complete devastation. Bodies of police officers littered the ground; their lives snuffed out by an unknown assailant. It was clear that the Haddonfield Police Department had been utterly decimated. But what caught Jamie's attention was the van parked and running, its surface emblazoned with the Smith's Grove Sanitarium logo. She saw him then, Michael, her uncle, still handcuffed and being forced into the van by two mysterious figures dressed in black cloaks.

The figures pushed themselves and Michael inside, slamming the door shut with a resounding thud. The engine roared to life, and the van began to move, disappearing into the night and leaving Jamie alone in the wreckage.

"Jamie... *Come closer.*" The voice man said.

Once more, Jamie was compelled to follow the malevolent voice, her steps carrying her towards the sidewalk that led to Main Street. Memories flooded her mind as she recalled when Rachel had once bought her a clown costume at Haddonfield Discount for Halloween. The thought faded quickly, and Jamie returned spellbound. She was unable to resist the hypnotic pull of the voice. It was as though she was caught in a waking dream, unable to escape its spell. As she drew closer to the end of the sidewalk, a man came into view. His presence was shrouded in an enigma. Jamie could feel her pulse quicken as she approached the man, a sense of foreboding settling over her like a dark cloud. She intuitively perceived that something terrible was about to happen, that she was on the cusp of a fate

worse than death.

Jamie approached. The figure before Jamie was shrouded in black from head to toe, his attire consisting of a long, flowing cloak, black pants, and boots, with a wide-brimmed hat that obscured his features from view. Despite his ominous appearance, Jamie knew deep down that this was the voice man. That he was the one who had been calling to her, drawing her ever closer to him. Despite her fear, Jamie was inexorably drawn to the enigmatic stranger, feeling familiarity and belonging wash over her as she approached him. It was as though he held the key to all the secrets of the universe, and Jamie knew that she had to be with him, that their fates were somehow intertwined.

*"Jamie... Come to me,"* he called out. His haunting voice wasn't so much internal as it was external now.

Without a second thought, Jamie obeyed, moving towards the man in black with a sense of purpose and determination. As she drew closer, the stranger enveloped her in his cloak, the fabric soft and warm against her skin.

But before she could fully comprehend what was happening, the man in black pressed a handkerchief to her mouth and nose, a sickly sweet smell overwhelming her senses.

Jamie Lloyd fell into blackness.

## Epilogue : Five Years Later

“**M**ichael... Oh, Michael, please don’t hurt me.” Jamie cried out as her uncle approached her. It had been five long years since she had been trapped in the bowels of Smith’s Grove Sanitarium. The medical tests and experiments conducted on her were strange, unusual, and, most of the time, painful. They had only explained small details to her, and those details were scarce and left her more confused. But over time, she began to see the bigger picture. She had been subjected to bizarre rituals with faceless and nameless strangers in the dark. As Jamie looked around, she was strapped to a cold, hard stone table in the center of the room—the orange, flickering glow of the candles surrounding her created grotesque shadows on the walls. The air was thick with the smell of burning wax and sulfur. Beyond the candle flames, she could sense the presence of faceless and nameless others who had come to witness the ritual. It was a candlelit ritual. The flames burned so brightly that she couldn’t see the people watching beyond them.

But she did know what was coming. They never bothered hiding that part from her. But knowing didn’t mean that she was prepared for such an atrocity. The impending act was a grotesque barbarity that would plague humanity forever if it



came to fruition. The man in black had revealed to Jamie five years ago that all the experiments and ceremonies, every poke and prod, and every single day since her birth, had been leading up to this moment - the merging of evil and innocence to bring forth the beast known as Thorn. The man in black had claimed that Michael, the current vessel of Thorn, was weakening for unknown reasons, and the beast must be transferred to a new host. Jamie was the chosen one, selected to bear the abominable offspring of evil and purity. As she lay strapped to the stone table, Jamie couldn't help but feel like she was just a pawn in the man in black's game and that nothing she could do would stop the impending horror.

The transference of Thorn would be done.

Via insemination.

-

The black-cloaked onlookers stood transfixed as the abomination unfolded before them, their twisted smiles betraying their depravity. These people, if they could even be called that, were nothing more than psychopaths reveling in a debased display of pure and unadulterated evil. Some of them even wept with joy as the dark ritual reached its climax. Jamie could take what was happening to her. She could take her entire life's events and everything she had endured. But what made Jamie sick to her stomach with horror was watching those motherfuckers cry and scream in joy and happiness at what was happening; the idea that these people *wanted* this to happen, that it filled them

with some sick religious fervor and that the rape and eventual product were fulfilling their unholy prophecy.

Once the ritual was over, the crowd parted - as the Red Sea did for Moses, creating a path for the man in black to walk through. His boots were adorned with spurs that jingled with each step against the stone floor as he made his way toward the stone table. His black cloak trailed behind him, swaying ominously with each movement. The atmosphere was thick with unnameable energy. It made Jamie's skin crawl, and she could feel a cold sweat on her forehead. The man in black's gaze was fixed on Michael, his dark eyes piercing through the veil of the black cloth that obscured his face. His voice was cold, loud, and commanding as he spoke, the weight of his words heavy. "Leave now, Michael. Your job is done." He said to the masked killer.

Jamie watched in terror as Michael silently complied with the man's orders, disappearing into the shadows without a word. The man in black turned his attention to Jamie, his steps measured and deliberate as he approached her. His cloak billowed behind him like a dark cloud, and the sound of his boots echoed in the cavernous room.

The man in black crouched down, his black cloak pooling around him, and gently lifted Jamie from the cold hard slab of stone where the abominable ritual had taken place. Jamie squirmed and thrashed in his grasp, her heart throbbing with fear and desperation. She kicked her legs and flailed her arms, trying to escape the man's grasp, but his hold on her was unyielding.

"DON'T YOU FUCKING TOUCH ME, GODDAMMIT! YOU SICK FUCKS, ALL OF YOU!!!" An unsettling symphony of piercing screams reverberated through the murky confines of

the dimly lit room, their echoes bouncing off the cold, unfeeling walls. With a tenacity that she didn't think she'd have the strength for, Jamie fought against the firm hold of the man in black, her body contorting in a frantic struggle for liberation. Like frenzied pendulums of raw defiance, her legs lashed out in a chaotic flurry, each kick propelled by an unbridled surge of a primal need to survive.

"Still the fighter, I see. It had to be done." The man in black told her.

He led Jamie, his grip firm yet strangely comforting, back to the abode that had confined her for the past five desolate years—a wretched dwelling, a cell that exuded a joyless chill and harbored the dampness of despair. Perplexity gnawed at her as she pondered how this accursed place had remained undiscovered by the prying eyes of the outside world. In the depths of her weary soul, a gnawing suspicion lingered, suggesting that the insidious tendrils of corruption extended far beyond the confines of her lonely cell, ensnaring the very fabric of the godforsaken hospital itself.

Within her sorrow, Jamie yearned for the presence of a familiar face, someone she sorely missed — Doctor Loomis. In the depths of her desolation, her fragmented mind clung to the remnants of hope, conjuring nocturnal visions during the short moments of respite when slumber reluctantly embraced her. In these elusive dreams, she would envision Sam, striding through the impenetrable barrier of her cell door to liberate her from this interminable torment. Yet, as the years passed, hope withered away like fragile petals, replaced by the morose acceptance that perhaps Doctor Loomis had succumbed to the inexorable march of time, his brave spirit forever extinguished.

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Jamie lay motionless in her bed, unconscious from the overwhelming pain and exhaustion inflicted upon her. *He* was standing over her. With a decisive gesture, the enigmatic figure in black snapped open a vial of potent smelling salts, unleashing a pungent cloud of heated bleach that swiftly invaded the air. The acrid odor pierced through Jamie's slumber, shattering her tranquility and propelling her into a frantic state of awakening. Disoriented and overwhelmed, she leaped out of bed, filling the room with her terrified screams and frantic movements. Fueled by a surge of adrenaline, she flailed her limbs, striking and kicking at the source of her disorientation.

Sensing the need for restraint, the man in black swiftly took hold of Jamie's thrashing arms, his grip firm yet controlled. To ensure her compliance, he positioned himself atop her quivering thighs, exerting physical dominance. Speaking in measured tones, his voice remarkably composed and oddly reassuring, he sought to pacify her turbulent emotions. "Fear not, child. What has been done is irreparable, and what you are is a testament to your destiny. You, Jamie, bear the weight of being Thorn's mother, the vessel of utmost profanity. Your womb holds the key to our future, and for that, we extend our gratitude. Your service and suffering shall be repaid with the ultimate gift - death."

Gradually, Jamie began to yield to the man's presence, her resistance subsiding as his hold on her gradually loosened. Overwhelmed by the unfathomable weight of it all, she succumbed to unconsciousness, her fragile psyche incapable of processing the enormity of the situation thrust upon her.

For all she felt anymore, Jamie Lloyd was dead already.

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It was just around one o'clock in the morning on October 31st, 1994, when the infant's first cries shattered the silence, echoing through the bowels of Smith's Grove.

The nightmare wasn't over.

And HE will come home.

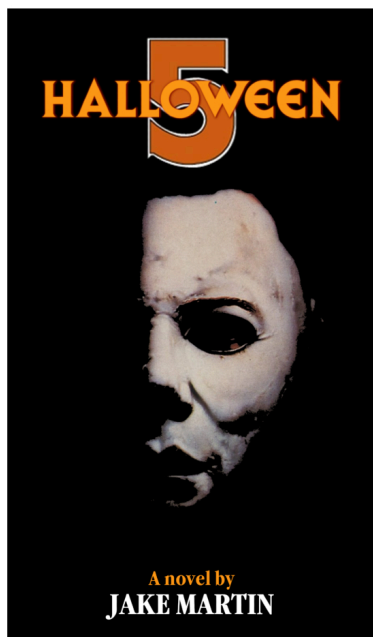
BONUS!

Designs by Brian Joseph.

ENJOY!

-

*BONUS!*



HALLOWEEN 5

